CENTRALIZATION AND GOVERNANCE: THE CASE OF DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES IN TURKIYE

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INTRODUCTION

Relationship between local and central actors is one of the most prominent subjects in the field of public management. Several studies attempt to analyse local-central relations in different countries (Lowndes & Wilson, 2003; Harrison, 2008; Young-Hyman, 2008; Karasu, 2009; Bentley et al. 2010), some underlining increased weight of centre in last decades. Commentators describe this situation as 'regionally orchestrated centralism' (Harrison, 2008), 'pragmatic localism' (Coaffee & Headlam, 2008) or 'new centralisation' (Karasu, 2009). In this context, the first chapter of this study will aim to examine revival of centre in the case of development agencies[1] in Türkiye. Analysis will be based on the implications of some discussions on global changes in politics, economy and public management, and regional policy experiences of a number of countries. In light of these, development agencies in Türkiye might provide an eligible case to be assessed in understanding centre's role in current local-central relations.

In general, development agencies are defined as semi-autonomous entities (Lagendijk et al. 2009). They have been established in European countries since the 1950s with aims of exploring regions' potentials, attracting and supporting investments in regions for development in social and economic terms (Kayasu & Yaşar, 2006). After the spread of development agency institutionalisation in the 1990s under European Union (EU) regional policies through new candidate countries including Türkiye, establishment of agencies became a salient topic in the 2000s (Young- Hyman, 2008; Karasu, 2009).

In this process, some perspectives such as new regionalism and hollowing out of state have frequently emphasised rise of regions and regional actors as opposed to classical dominant position of central state, which was no longer seen as an important actor in determining regional development policies (Harrison, 2008; Gündoğdu, 2009). Thesis on rescaling and restructuring state and economy through regional context tend to downgrade role of central institutions in achieving regionalisation-based goals (Deas & Ward, 2000; Clarke, 2009). Similarly, in Türkiye, literature on development agencies has been generally based on such arguments in explaining establishment, conditions and internal formulations of agencies (Kayasu & Yaşar, 2006; Gündoğdu, 2009).

Nevertheless, in Türkiye, 'centre' sustained to be a key player with differentiated instruments under changing external and internal

[1] The name of development agencies does not contain the word 'regional' since the 2006 Law which formed agencies (CKA, 2006).

conditions. State Planning Organisation (DPT)[2], as a central institution responsible for development policies and implementations, was authorised to coordinate, monitor and assess development agency activities, while development agencies were also framed under dominance of central actors at local level, with leadership of governors in regions (Young-Hyman, 2008; Lagendijk et al. 2009; Şinik, 2010). In addition to this, central coordinating actions incrementally strengthened with emergence of new committees and commissions responsible for coordination in regional development policies in the early 2010s (Müftüoğlu, 2012).

Theoretically, this contradicts ideas of hollowing out thesis and new regionalist formulations on increased role of regional scale and regional actors. However, there is a limited number of studies which critically examine relations in development agencies and related policies. In explaining this centrally framed regionalisation, prominent tendency in literature on Turkish regional policies offers that conventional strength of central state and its institutions prevents, resists or decelerates regionalisation process in development agencies of Türkiye (Dulupçu, 2005; Göymen, 2005; Kayasu & Yaşar, 2006; Lagendijk et al. 2009).[3] According to such views, externally triggered regional policies in Türkiye (Dulupçu, 2005) were based on a centrally determined direction (Kayasu & Yaşar, 2006) because of deep-rooted top-down dynamics of local-central relations in Turkish politics (Young-Hyman, 2008; Lagendijk et al. 2009). Despite these arguments present **evidence** on structural difficulties in regionalisation to some extent, it seems to be difficult to explain recent increasing role of central coordination and monitoring in the light of these**.**

In this study, it will be offered that new situation especially in development agency-related policies has primarily different causes rather than just being based on legacy of conventional top-down dynamics or EU-based regionalist schemes mentioned above. Hence, this study will firstly attempt to analyse issue under changing external and internal conditions to answer question on current centralisation in Turkish development agencies. Thus, first section will aim to capture changing global context in terms of transition from Washington Consensus to Post-Washington Consensus (PWC) since the late 1990s (Stiglitz, 2004; Krogstad, 2007) to

[2] Although a decree law (The Official Gazette, 2011) transformed the institution into the Ministry of Development in 2011, the abbreviation 'DPT' will be used for clarity.

[3] One exception is the research of Karasu (2009) which criticises new regionalist perspective in a comparative analysis and suggests that this is a 'new centralist' situation caused by global capitalism that is claimed to be reframing global, national and regional 'centre's.

evaluate renewed role of central state in development policies. Moreover, various instruments of New Public Management (NPM) in the last decades, which have changed structure and principles of public bodies into a performance and outcome-based mantra (Peters, 2002), will be discussed. With the highlights of studies on 'regulatory state' (Gilardi et al. 2006; Levi-Faur, 2010) and 'auditing explosion' (Power, 2000), expanding control and coordination instruments of centre will be presented.

After this discussion of external changes, lessons from some experiences of different countries such as Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries and United Kingdom (UK) will be analysed. Arguments on New Localism (Lowndes & Wilson, 2003; Stoker, 2004), especially with contribution of Pragmatic New Localism view (Coaffee & Headlam, 2008), will be evaluated to explore some intermediate and internal causes, such as inefficiency, complexity and uncertainty, in increasing centre's dominance in local-central relations. In comparison with new regionalist claims on centre and region, arguments on New Localism from UK and experiences of CEE countries will be more helpful to measure central government's role in recent local-central relations. Moreover, difficulties derived from traditional hierarchical structure of CEE countries (Young-Hyman, 2008) will be examined in terms of their impact on regionalisation.

In the light of such lessons from other countries, the section on Turkish development agencies will be based on three sub-headings including central coordination demand, pragmatic tendencies and credibility of hierarchy-based arguments. Analytical framework for explaining centralization in the case of development agencies in Türkiye will be built on arguments derived from these root causes and intermediate determinants. Relevant studies, legal amendments, relations between local and central actors and internal experiences of development agencies will contribute to analysis.

Second chapter of this study will focus on governance mechanisms and positions of actors in development agencies. As mentioned above development agencies have been the subject of debate in the field of public administration in Türkiye since their inception. These agencies, established in 2006, have been discussed in Turkish literature from various perspectives, including their position within Turkish administrative structure, their connections to international, national, and local capital (Güler, 2009; Övgün, 2017), their relationship with EU policies and the concept of policy transfer (Tahtalıoğlu & Özgür, 2016), their place in regionalization-centralization trends (Kutlu & Görün, 2018; Övgün, 2013), their relevance to scale and organizational preferences coupled with government pragmatism (Karasu, 2015), and their governance mechanisms (Akpınar, 2017; Arslan, 2016; Çelik, 2018). Second chapter

will address development councils, a prominent element of agencies within the context of **governance and** examine the structure and functioning of development councils within the framework of governance concept.

Governance is generally accepted as a multi-actor process involving private sector and civil society organizations, rather than single-actor decision-making processes dominated by state (Atmaca, 2020; Kutlu & Görün, 2016; Özhan & Keser, 2021). In this regard, development councils, which bring together public, private, and civil sectors, provide a platform for governance to become visible within agencies. While these councils are sometimes viewed favorably for their democratic and participatory nature, they are also criticized for not being as "governance-oriented" as desired. For instance, presence and influence of public sector actors within governance mechanism has often been considered a negative indicator of a tendency toward centralization. The 2014 report of State Supervisory Council (Devlet Denetleme Kurulu-DDK) (DDK, 2014) pointed out that agencies have a reality that does not conform to normative definitions of governance and that they face danger of becoming public institutions with a predominantly centralized aspect, incompatible with their "founding philosophy". What is meant here by "founding philosophy" is nothing more than governance and ideas related to new regionalism and hollowing-out mentioned above. This view has been echoed in various studies in Turkish literature, and conclusions, in line with the DDK report, have been reached that agencies have strayed from their "founding philosophy" (Akbaş, 2017; Akpınar, 2017; Karaca, 2019). Furthermore, as part of the measures taken during the state of emergency in 2016, development council memberships were terminated in all agencies. As of 2017, new members of development councils were announced in only three agencies (İstanbul Development Agency-İSTKA, Ankara Development Agency-ANKARAKA, and İzmir Development Agency-İZKA), which are based in a single province. Currently, development councils in three agencies continue their activities, while development councils in the other 23 agencies do not actually exist. When considered from perspective of the DDK report, it is possible to argue that this situation contradicts "founding philosophy".

However, governance, as understood as "founding philosophy", generally appears as a concept considered with normative and idealized assumptions. In this context, governance can be idealized with claims such as that governance would bring about democratization and civil society participation, that agency-type organizations would foster participation-based decision-making processes, and that, unlike classical centralized and bureaucratic structures, state-society relationship would positively change based on multidimensional and multi-actor interaction. Therefore, it is

important to examine concrete examples associated with governance and, specifically in the context of development councils, to determine which actors are present and which of these are influential within this "multi-actor" interaction. For instance, Güler (2009) emphasizes that, in the early stages of agencies, non-public actors within councils were largely examples of private actors and that these predominated on councils. Çelik (2018), in his study examining İZKA development council, found that many council members, considered private and civil sectors, came from business circles. In this context, actors involved in governance today and orientation that emerges based on current functioning and local-central relations remain critical issues.

Development council currently in place in three agencies appear to have two primary functions. These are to elect three representatives from private and non-governmental sectors to the board of directors and to make recommendations to the board of directors. The first function is quite critical. According to Article 193 of Presidential Decree No. 4, which entered into force in 2018, the board of directors consist of governor, metropolitan mayor, secretary general of agency, president of Chamber of Industry in province, president of Chamber of Commerce in province, and three representatives from private sector and/or non-governmental organizations to be selected by development council in single-province regions. Thus, three members elected by development councils in these agencies, along with heads of provincial chambers of industry and commerce on the board of directors, bring number of private and non-governmental sector representatives on the board of directors to five. Therefore, although the board of directors are chaired by governor, the fact that majority of councils are comprised of private and non-governmental sectors demonstrates that a trend consistent with the "founding philosophy" continues in three agencies. According to Article 194 of the decree, members elected by development councils in three agencies appear to influence overall functioning and balance of the board of directors, which is responsible for financial decisions, approving agency's budget, and approving proposals for projects and activities.

Therefore, question of who will serve on councils in these agencies remains crucial. Continued existence of such a critical function suggests that pragmatic choices favouring business groups may be at play in centre's selection of members to development councils. For this reason, it is necessary to examine membership composition and electoral function of development councils. Second chapter of this study will examine structure and membership composition of development councils, a critical element of the views and criticisms related to "founding philosophy". Main argument here is that state-capital relations, and consequently, pragmatic

preferences, influence functioning of councils and selection of members. In this context, first two sections of the chapter will discuss relationship between agencies, development councils, and governance. Then, member compositions of current İSTKA, ANKARAKA, and İZKA development councils will be examined in terms of "founding philosophy" to illustrate current functioning. This will aim to clarify weight of private and civil society on current councils and whether their representatives are linked to centre and/or business circles.

1. EXPLAINING REVIVAL OF CENTRE: GLOBAL CHANGES, REGIONAL POLICIES AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT[4]

1.1. Washington Consensus and New Regionalism

Crisis-prone decade of the 1970s created pressures on Western countries to change accumulation regime and socio-spatial setting of Keynesian welfare state into neoliberal model (Jessop, 2002; Öniş & Şenses, 2005; Krogstad, 2007). Major aims of new framework, which was named as Washington Consensus, were to enhance principles, such as fiscal discipline, reduction in public expenditures, deregulation, decentralisation, minimal state and governance (ibid; Müftüoğlu, 2012). Accordingly, this neoliberal trend was spread out rest of the world by prescriptive role of international bodies such as International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) (Jessop, 2002; Öniş & Şenses, 2005). Therefore, these conditions produced a necessity in many countries to redefine space and scale of territorial context. Moreover, proponents of hollowing out thesis claimed that national state lost its credibility in rise of globalisation and regionalisation (Deas & Ward, 2000; Clarke, 2009). Under these circumstances, new multi-dimensional framework of scales included national, international and sub-national levels (Jessop, 2002; Harrison, 2008).

For instance, regional policies of EU in the 1990s were shaped by this sort of changes related to rescaling and restructuring national state. Local level could have a possibility to increase its sources and authority in this process by the help of a regionalist project (Deas & Ward, 2000). While national states were considered as dysfunctional structures, new regionalism, as a trendy topic in European regional studies in the 1990s, was based on these changes in accumulation model and in targets of rescaling central state by giving a remarkable position to regions (Harrison, 2008; Karasu, 2009). In general, new regionalism emphasises power transfer towards regional authorities for the sake of regional development (Loewendahl-Ertugal, 2005). Regions are seen as capable entities to learn from successful regions and to improve their own assets with innovation and network of institutions (Gündoğdu, 2009). It is not hard to predict that spread of new agencies for regional development in Europe is a result of rise of regions and of need to form a network of learning regions.

However, success of new regionalism and decentralisation is

[4] This chapter derives from the author's master's thesis, *Explaining the Revival of the Centre in Local–Central Relations: The Case of Regional Development Agencies in Turkey*, completed at Birkbeck College, University of London.

arguable. As Harrison (2008) mentions, there are some counterarguments claiming that regionalism does not necessarily eliminate or decrease power of central state. He further suggests that regionalisation experience in UK is conversely an example of a 'regionally orchestrated centralism'. Some other scholars describe this as a paradox of centre's 'control-based strategies' (Lowndes & Wilson, 2003) and as increased prescriptions of central state (Bentley et al. 2010). Moreover, Karasu (2009) argues that same problem is prevalent in different countries such as Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Türkiye.

At this point, it is possible to ask a question whether these experiences of different countries are results of a coincidence or not. A generalisation that offers a great interconnectedness across these countries is not convincing, because the countries might have specific conditions in historical, structural and institutional aspects. In addition to this, exploring such a general framework is not a subject of this study. Nevertheless, it is not entirely wrong to search for a more consistent answer than descriptions of new regionalist perspective of the 1990s. With this aim, the subsequent section will investigate changes in Washington Consensus and neoliberal paradigm in the late 1990s and possible outcomes of this new transformation. It might help to capture local-central relations in relevant countries and to better evaluate Turkish development agency experience.

1.2. A Critical Juncture: Post-Washington Consensus

In the mid-1990s, some remarkable changes in world economy cast doubts on first-wave arguments of neoliberalism, and in parallel to this, on views related to new regionalism and hollowing out of state. Subsequent crisis in some developing countries, such as Mexica, Russia, Argentine and ones from East Asia, required to investigate prescriptions of WB and IMF under Washington Consensus (Stiglitz, 2004; Krogstad, 2007). According to this, formulations including decentralisation, liberalisation and deregulation, which had seen state's role as less functional in economic relations, became more difficult to be advocated than as the previous period. Free market view of neoliberalism with the emphasis on avoiding state intervention and regulation in market began to be seen as a reason of the set of crises in the 1990s (Öniş & Şenses, 2005).

Then, revival of state's role in market economies became one of the fundamental features in following consensus, namely Post-Washington Consensus-PWC (Stiglitz, 2004; Öniş & Şenses, 2005; Krogstad, 2007). Despite PWC did not completely give up neoliberal priorities (ibid; Güven, 2008), it altered the previous views on decadent central state and its minimal role in social and economic context. In development issues, for instance, a 1997 report of WB underlined significance of state by accepting it as an actor that complements market (Krogstad, 2007). That was

inconsistent with previous ideas related to hollowing-out of state and new regionalism which had downgraded role of state in development policies.

However, this shift does not mean that state would currently play again an interventionist role in a classical concept. Instead, this renewed role denotes a mixed and multi-dimensional feature. Öniş and Şenses (2005) suggest that state in PWC consists of some characteristics derived from a synthesis between national developmentalism and neoliberalism. While the former focuses upon an administrative model that attempts to overcome market failures, the latter insists on beneficial structure of free market (ibid). In this context, the authors further claim that PWC accepts not only significance of state in free market conditions, but also requirement that state should play an innovative role in institutionalisation and governance.

Furthermore, regulatory functions of state increased under these changed circumstances. Regulation is described by Levi-Faur (2010) in broad terms. According to him, regulation includes prescriptions, administrative rules, monitoring and assessing given rules by public or private bodies over other actors. In this respect, it is claimed that 'regulatory state' is able to control economy in an administrative framework (Gilardi et al. 2006). However, this does not refer to classical hierarchism or interventionism of state over society and economy. In this new kind of relationship, state plays a leading, monitoring and guiding role, while private actors provide services (Jordana & Levi-Faur, 2004). Here, important point is that control-based activities, such as auditing, monitoring and assessment, reach a critical level in socioeconomic relations (Power, 2000). This situation is more vital for this study's aim in examining local-central relations than analysing only scope or role of central state. In the following section, these control mechanisms will be focused on to highlight centrally managed regional policies.

1.3. New Public Management Reforms and State

As seen, alterations in politics and economy since the 1980s produced an undeniable differentiation in characteristics of state. Despite early considerations for hollowing out, these changes did not entirely terminate control capacities of state. Instead, its scope, scale, capacity and instruments were redefined in this period. State transformed into a leading and guiding actor that has a set of control and assessment tools in its hands, while non-state actors conduct service provisions and relevant interactions under this setting (Jordana & Levi-Faur, 2004). A metaphor used by Braithwaite (cited in ibid, p.11) categorises these new roles into two actions. While state's actions are described as steering, movements of non-state actors are framed as rowing. This categorisation helps to build an understandable departure point in examining overlapping changes in

public management since the 1980s. This new logic of 'steering but not rowing' is considered as one of the significant fundamentals of reform in public administration, which is framed as New Public Management-NPM (Peters, 2002).

According to NPM, major suggestion is that central state could be an enabler in service provision but not a direct provider (ibid). Main requirements become to transform traditional tenets of public sector and to apply private sector's principles and mechanisms into public sector (Brereton & Temple, 1999). Traditional public management was based on rule-based criteria and direct control over public bodies in a hierarchical system (Peters, 2002). With the aim of changing this model, NPM frames an indirect control model based on steering service provision and applying market-like principles into public sector (ibid). These principles, such as efficiency, performance measurement and outcome-based assessment, change structure and nature of public bodies (Brereton & Temple, 1999). As understood, tendency in NPM reforms is to alter direct control capacity in public management. Conventional hierarchy is aimed to be replaced with indirect control mechanisms for achieving targets, desired outcomes and efficiency under NPM (Peters, 2002).

However, new tools to assess outcomes and to control other players paradoxically cause an increase in power of central institutions. An example from local-central relations in UK can make this argument more obvious. As Lowndes and Wilson (2003) mention, the 2001 White Paper, which aims to improve service quality and democratic participation in local governance, brings several obligations over local actors and monitoring facilities of central authorities over local services. Such instruments aim to measure performance of local authorities by rewarding high level efforts with incentives and possibilities to be more autonomous (ibid). This reward-based model is described by Lowndes and Wilson as 'earned autonomy'. Furthermore, it is said that this model recognises superiority of managerial features over local democracy by applying central control and rewarding strategies over local services (ibid).

As seen, NPM's focus is on measuring performance and outcome to achieve standards and targets. This might be considered as consistent with PWC. As noted earlier, central state is armed with control and assessment mechanisms in a regulatory position to avoid a failure or inefficiency. As Jessop (2002) argues, neoliberalism may need this kind of state-based rearrangements to prevent crisis in social and economic context. These mechanisms are more common in regulatory state model of current decades (Levi-Faur, 2010). In this framework, an instance of control-based mechanisms is seen as increased number of auditing and inspection authorities (Power, 2000). Power defines this as an emergence

of 'Audit Society' which is a result of NPM principles and regulatory framework aimed to build indirect control mechanisms over institutions. According to Power (1996), centre conducts both decentralisation-aimed policies especially in services with participation of local or non-governmental actors, and control-based strategies over relevant services and institutions. In this way, several bodies that measure performance and indicators gradually expand in scope and influence (Power, 2000). This overlaps renewed role of state within multi-dimensional, multi- level interaction of several actors in politics and economy under PWC.[5]

Overall, NPM presents various tools and criteria, such as performance measurement, monitoring and auditing, to central institutions (Peters, 2002). Accordingly, one argument here is that these features possibly contribute capabilities of central institutions in controlling and monitoring activities over local and regional bodies. While NPM, theoretically, aims to eliminate hierarchical model of traditional public management (Brereton & Temple, 1999), it is open to produce paradoxical results increasing importance of a different kind of control tools of centre (Power, 2000). Nevertheless, there is a difficulty in examining its weight in local-central relations. Thus, it is predicted here that there should be another more or less important factors related to institutional, local or national contexts, which complement usage of NPM mechanisms and principles towards central control. For this reason, next section will focus on local-central relations to highlight dichotomy of localism and centre's dominance.

1.4. Revival of Centre in Local-Central Relations

As will be discussed later in this study, development agency experience in Türkiye indicates a wide control of central authorities over agencies. Indeed, this would not be so surprising when some other countries' experiences are considered. For instance, studies on New

[5] Here, Public Governance Paradigm (PGP) that increased in the 1990s criticises the efficiency-centred formulation of NPM (Bovaird, 2004). Although PGP agrees with NPM on redefined steering role of state, and on efficiency target (Peters, 2002), main emphasis of it is based on non-state actors' participation into decision-making and management process (ibid; Bovaird 2004). Nevertheless, role of governments in governance is open to debates. While early considerations framed a decreased role of central state in governance issues, state-centric approaches reject validity of these arguments (Bell & Hindmoor, 2009). Bell and Hindmoor argue that state is still centrally important in determining, arranging and steering governance-based relations. In this study, governance will be focused in the second chapter to examine positions of actors in the case of development agencies in Türkiye.

Localism in UK might highlight this issue. New Localism originally refers to wave of devolving authority and resources from centre to local bodies in the 1980s and 1990s (Stoker, 2004). However, implementations contradictorily contain a centralisation in relations (Lowndes & Wilson, 2003). For instance, organisation model and funding system of development agencies in UK were widely determined by centre and members of agency boards were centrally appointed actors (Wilson, 2003).

Similarly, studies on CEE countries demonstrate centre's weight in regional policies. Centre's superiority is based on activities of ministries or central institutions in development agency's structure of some CEE countries (Kayasu & Yaşar, 2006; Young-Hyman, 2008; Karasu, 2009). Since these similarities are highly remarkable in comparison with Turkish experience, lessons from these countries would predictably contribute to understand centrally determined structure of development agencies in Türkiye.

At this point, observations and views in studies on such experiences will be categorised here into three sections, namely coordination, pragmatism and hierarchy. In discussion of coordination, it will be suggested that there is a coordination demand expected from central level, because of reasons derived from efficiency and outcome-related design of public institutions. Additionally, other reasons for central coordination demand will be presented as possible effects of complexity and uncertainty in policies and organizational structures (Stoker, 2002; Wilson, 2003; Sabel & Zeitlin, 2012). In debate of pragmatism, pragmatic new localism view (Coaffee & Headlam, 2008) will be examined to find some implications to explain centre's dominance in local and regional policies. Moreover, discussion of hierarchy will be based on problems of deep-rooted top-down characteristics of CEE countries, which have been similarly experienced in conventional unitary model of Turkish state (Young-Hyman, 2008).

1.4.1. Revival of Centre: A Demand for Central Coordination?

As mentioned previously, NPM created a new design for public administration by putting efficiency, outcome-based and performance-related prescriptions and mechanisms into public sector (Peters, 2002). However, Walker (cited in Jones et al. 2005, p. 397) claims that localisation in UK lacks coordination between local and central actors to enhance an efficient functioning. This inefficient and messy model of localisation, Walker continues, might require returning to central coordination under regulatory strength of centre (ibid).

For instance, inspections and auditing actions in UK, under

central institutions such as Best Value Inspectorate or Improvement and Development Agency, expand scope and effectivity in controlling local agencies to achieve given targets (Stoker, 2002). Despite this is considered as a hierarchical attitude by some commentators (Wilson, 2003), this refers to demand for coordination to reach efficiency goals. While central government seeks to sustain reform efforts on redesigning local level (ibid), it also increasingly applies controlling and auditing instruments to improve quality of services and outcomes (Bentley et al. 2010).

In addition to UK experience, examples from CEE countries follow a parallel line with this efficiency-based coordination demand. As observed by Young-Hyman (2008), central institutions that attempt to enhance efficiency in development agencies are driving forces to succeed local projects in these countries. Budgets of agencies are also generally determined by centre to increase efficiency (ibid). Predictably, lack of central coordination and support may have negatively affected development agencies' efficiency. For instance, unsuccessful attempt of Polish development agencies in the 1990s on using funds come from only private sector, in absence of central coordination, harmed capability to form a long-term development strategy (ibid). Moreover, in the Czech Republic, development agencies which are not centrally funded became less efficient than the ones that receive centre's support (ibid). Overall, inefficiency problems, as understood, might cause a demand for central coordination to achieve efficiency targets. In this way, centre follows an NPM-based path in local policies.

Complexity is also a problem in local-central relations. Stoker (2002) argues that complexity problem is mostly derived from increased number of institutions at both local and national levels. New local governance contains several players within wide range of platforms (ibid). In this complexity, competition among old-established local bodies and newly emerged entities may occur, and institutions possibly attempt to dominate one another to increase their share in both decision-making and funding in region (Deas & Ward, 2000). As emphasised by Deas and Ward, a similar type of competition between local bodies that occurred in British regional policy could be solved by building a coordinating institution, namely Regional Chambers, which attempt to compromise regional goals of development agencies. One aim here is seen as to synchronise regional objectives with national development priorities (ibid).

Nevertheless, level of coordination within this complex formula is not certain. While regional councils or committees may also conduct coordinating initiatives in, for instance, Hungary and the Czech Republic, there are regional development ministries and national agencies for coordination in some medium-sized CEE countries (Kayasu & Yaşar,

2006). In the light of these different level solutions of complexity, it can be claimed that there is a requirement for coordination due to complexity, yet it is not certain whether central or regional bodies would be responsible for it.

Similarly, uncertainty is another problem of local governance (Stoker, 2002; Sabel & Zeitlin, 2012). Sabel and Zeitlin argue that uncertainty is a result of inexperience and lack of knowledge on governance issues. In this way, difficulties derived from limited experience and expertise of CEE countries and their regions on regional development issues are seen as constraints to set an agenda (Young-Hyman, 2008).

Also in UK, uncertainty is considered as a severe problem for local governance (Stoker, 2002). Stoker argues that this problem might be overcome by a network system among actors, in which they share information and interact each other. However, Wilson (2003) claims that UK model of local governance may provide a consultant role to local players, but it does not guarantee an impact of them in decision-making because of ongoing weight of central bodies in determining governance process.

However, as similar to complexity issue, varied implementations and attitudes are also valid for uncertainty problem. While centre may play a crucial role in coordinating and solving uncertainty problem, as seen in UK and some CEE countries (Young-Hyman, 2008), there are also parallel aims to build joint interaction mechanisms or regional platforms for local and central actors (ibid, Stoker, 2004). Overall, it is hard to predict that uncertainty and complexity absolutely require a central agenda when there is a need for coordination to solve these problems. The sections about pragmatism and hierarchy discussed below may fill gaps caused by such issues.

1.4.2. Revival of Centre: A Pragmatic Tendency?

As a philosophical stance, pragmatism offers a perspective that best attitude in forming things is based on experimental and practical ways to find the most effective solutions to problematic issues (Coaffee & Headlam, 2008). In this context, Coaffee and Headlam suggest that proponents of pragmatism do not accept universal or unchangeable ideal schemes, yet they focus on learning from other experiences, indicators or events. For localism and public management, this means to conduct policies which are not determined by ideological views, routine prescriptions or instruments (Lowndes & Wilson, 2003). In parallel to suggestions on NPM, it is claimed that pragmatism in public sector would become evident during crisis or inefficiency times to overcome these troubles (Coaffee & Headlam, 2008).

When it comes to New Localism, Coaffee and Headlam argue that decentralisation-based aims are built in hybrid, flexible and changeable formulations. Stoker (2004), in addition to this, claims that pragmatic ways of New Localism are experimental solutions to problems related to complexity or uncertainty. This argument might explain why complexity and uncertainty problems are not solved in neither solely 'centralist' nor solely 'localist' way. In this way, it can be claimed that pragmatic tendency is in a relationship with PWC's hybrid prescriptions recalling state into solving problems. At this point, pragmatic approach attempts to explain such hybrid governing. However, it seems to be a result, but not a reason, of such demands related to efficiency, outcome or better functioning in local or central services.

Pragmatic view mainly focuses on Third Way perspective of New Labour, which basically suggests evidence-based, non-ideological and results-oriented policies (Coaffee & Headlam, 2008). In this context, New Labour's Third Way, by being based on outcomes and functions in decision-making (ibid), follows a pragmatic path in institution-building process of development agencies. When they first came to power in 1997, they were proponents of regional governance (Deas & Ward, 2000). However, Deas and Ward state that agencies were formed on a context with budget constraints and limited capacity of influence in decision-making. One factor in changing regionalist route was opposition of Department of Trade and Industry, resided in centre (ibid). The department was advocating that management of investments should continue to stay at centre to avoid possible harms of competition among regions in attracting financial resources. Moreover, another factor was again competition between local actors in attempting to affect decisions on plans and funding in regions (ibid). Solution by 'pragmatic localism' was to establish Regional Chambers to compromise competing interests of actors and to provide conditions of joint implementation. Furthermore, members of development agencies were appointed by centre, despite agencies had been established for improving regions and regional interests with a new regionalist agenda (ibid).

Indeed, this complicated scheme is consistent with pragmatic new localism approach, as suggested by Coaffee and Headlam (2008) that local bodies should improve connections each other under changeable prescriptions and targets determined by centre. However, it is not an absolute 'centralism' or 'localism', but an experimental balance of both two (ibid). In this respect, it can be predicted that centre's dominance in pragmatic terms seems to depend on an emergence or continuum of inefficiency, complexity or uncertainty problems that require central coordination.

1.4.3. Revival of Centre: A Consequence of Classical Hierarchism?

Apart from the causes above, centre's dominance in regional policies is also explained by consequences of classical hierarchical structure of some of these countries. Initially, consequences of traditional top-down models are seen as related to inexperience in regional policies and weakness of local actors and institutions (Young-Hyman, 2008). Young-Hyman claims that slow and ineffective regional institutionalisation in CEE countries is remarkably related to top-down model of these ex-communist countries. Subsequently, he argues that this is a consequence of unitary models of these states which had not contained a regional level before. For instance, the Czech Republic and Poland had not formed a regional administrative unit until 1999 (ibid). Thus, countries possessed a strong central capacity and weak capabilities of sub-national organisations and actors, when they began to apply regionalisation policies triggered by EU membership objective in the 1990s (ibid).

Furthermore, some commentators offer more detailed arguments in the issue of weakness and inexperience than just presenting conventional structure as a reason of current dominance of centre. Dulupçu (2005) claims that sub-national actors in developing countries tend to be more dependent to central state under these ex-hierarchical conditions. This logically may give more responsibility to central actors in establishing a local governance model. On the other hand, Lagendijk et al. (2009) mentions that possible difficulties in controlling local players in terms of financial or political autonomy are important concerns of central governments. In this way, centre attempts to compromise different interests at various levels. This argument may help to explain complexity problem, as argued earlier that competing positions of actors and complex institutionalisation may cause a demand for central coordination.

However, these conventional hierarchy-based suggestions, in general, do not present an adequate empirical data or an understandable interconnectedness between traditional strength and current dominance of centre in regional policy implementations. The only convincing point is that these countries have powerful central institutions, because of their deep-rooted hierarchical models. These might explain why central institutions have more responsibilities in regional development but not offer a suggestion why and how strength of centre is used in current regional policies. They have also a theoretical gap while examining mixed and changeable formulations of institutionalisation, need for mechanisms of NPM, demand for coordination or new role of centre. Overall, it is possible to say that suggestions on traditional hierarchy as a major cause do not provide a complete framework for understanding current situation in local-

central relations, as compared to arguments related to the coordination demand and pragmatic localism.

1.4.4. Analytical Framework

As understood, efficient functioning of development agencies seems to be significant in requiring a coordinating action. For this reason, in Turkish case, past experiences, budget allocation and relevant legal amendments will be primarily examined to measure correlation between central coordination and NPM-based principles. Subsequently, complexity and uncertainty problems will be checked whether they are related to centralised coordination in the light of specific details of various experiences derived from institutionalisation processes of development agencies, and of findings assessing coordination issue in literature. Furthermore, in discussion of pragmatism, overlapping conflicts, problems and changes made at central level will be discussed to indicate experimental way of development agency-related policies in critical periods. Finally, hierarchical roots of Türkiye will be analysed in terms of validity and limitation of relevant suggestions to question theoretical linkages between deep-rooted strength of centre and new model of centre's dominance. For entire analysis, it is crucial to understand role and contributions of DPT and of relevant actors to development agencies. Moreover, position of central government's moves in shaping determinants of new centralised policies will be examined within a broad context of this period under PWC and regulatory expansion.

1.5. Development Agencies in Türkiye

1.5.1. Historical Background

Türkiye met with reform packages of Washington Consensus in the mid-1980s (Öniş & Şenses, 2005), by applying neoliberal prescriptions of IMF and WB (Güven, 2008). These contained liberalisation of domestic economic regime (ibid) and deregulation that downgraded the state's role in economy and politics (Öniş & Şenses, 2005). However, the set of crises in the 1990s and the deepest one in 2001 created doubts on the validity of these prescriptions (ibid) and triggered the emergence of PWC agenda in the subsequent years (Güven, 2008). Thus, structural reform programme, which was started by coalition government of the time and was continued by Justice and Development Party (AKP) government since 2002, brought significant transformation to the institutional structures of the public organisations (ibid) and to development policies (Öniş & Şenses, 2005).

PWC model synthesising national developmentalism and neoliberalism, according to Öniş and Şenses, was concentrating on improving performance of the state, which reassumes a vital role in development by the application of the market-based principles and mechanisms, in line with the suggestions of NPM perspective. In this

framework, change of the institutions and hybrid forms of the newly emerged bodies became prominent in development policies in this period (ibid). Furthermore, increased role of regulatory institutions, auditing mechanisms and performance measurements turned the state into a regulatory entity (Özuğurlu, 2009). Position of development agencies is strongly relevant to these changes within various levels and institutions, especially with its design and relationship with DPT which is the coordinating institution that controls, monitors and assesses the functioning of development agencies.

In general, agencies in Türkiye are seen by-products of the EU accession process (Dulupçu, 2005; Karasu, 2009). In the 1990s, new candidate countries, including the CEE states and Türkiye, had started to implement reforms about regional development to gain advantages in the membership negotiations (ibid). This period was shaped by new regionalist views that recognised regions and development agencies as main parts of regional policies (Young-Hyman, 2008; Karasu, 2009).

In this context, candidacy process of Türkiye which started in the 1999 Helsinki Summit and the 2001 Accession Partnership Document were critical landmarks in beginning to establish development agencies at sub-national level (Kayasu & Yaşar, 2006). The 2001 document determined the priorities on several issues including regional policy. Turkish state officials categorised the territories and regional levels according to an EU-based system, namely the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS), in 2002 (Young-Hyman, 2008). In this sense, the plan was to establish development agencies in 26 sub-regions, with the aim of supporting regional projects, improving cooperation among public and private actors to achieve development objectives and sustaining research and promotion for regional development, by using mainly the EU funds and central budget resources (ibid). Subsequently, 2 of 26 agencies were formed in 2006, while 8 agencies were built in 2008 (Doğruel, 2012). Finally, the other 16 agencies were established in 2009 (ibid).

Despite regionalist nature of this institution-building process, coordination tasks under the responsibility of DPT was criticised (Kayasu & Yaşar, 2006; Lagendijk et al. 2009). Nevertheless, this weight of the centre would not be surprising when the progress reports of the EU on Türkiye's accession are examined. For instance, in the 2001 report, the EU recommended that DPT might be a central coordinating institution in these new regional policies (Şinik, 2010). Although, excessive dominance of the centre was criticised in further reports (ibid), a member of the European Commission's delegation unofficially commented in 2006 that the DPT's role in development agency-related issues necessarily remains in the subsequent years in coordinating the agencies, managing the funds and

sustaining its role in planning at both regional and national scales (Reeves, 2006).

Bearing on mind that policies related to development agencies do not have monolithic patterns, it can be suggested that the slow-motion establishment process of development agencies in Türkiye is generally built on a centrally determined framework, while aiming to follow regional objectives triggered by new regionalist agenda of the EU accession process. In order to analyse this complicated issue, it is better to focus on three categories, namely coordination, pragmatism and hierarchy, which may present internal conditions of the country, institutions and policies.

1.5.2. Demand for Central Coordination

Initially, efficiency seems to be relevant to activities about budget allocation within regional policy implementations and development agencies. As a critical juncture, the 2001 crisis, which deeply affected Turkish economy (Güven, 2008), had increased ideas on necessity of structural changes, by bringing a kind of regulatory neoliberal model to Turkish politics (Öniş, 2012). In this context, major issue for Turkish public management was to change traditional budget model and auditing mechanisms into a new system based on performance and outcome in order to use resources efficiently in accordance with NPM logic. As an example of this need, the budget and efficiency problems of previous terms were emphasised as major constraints of public bodies in a 2003 draft law on public management (TBMM, 2003).

For budget allocation of development agencies, coordination demand simultaneously occurred with efficiency concern. In the Preliminary National Development Plan (DPT, 2003a), regional development resources including funds of both the EU and central state were planned to be effectively used in the subsequent period between 2004 and 2006. According to the 2005 Draft Law on development agencies (TBMM, 2005), the critical point was to distribute these funds in a balanced and efficient way within the projects and initiatives. In case of a possible absence of central coordination, the centre's fear was to not able to control local expenditures in development agency system (Lagendijk et al. 2009).

On the other hand, past experiences of development agencies in Türkiye might highlight the local dimension of central coordination demand. As from the mid-1990s, there were some initiatives led by non-governmental actors to establish regional development agencies in the cities such as Izmir, Mersin, Samsun and Adana (Temizocak, 2006; Özgümüş, 2006; Lagendijk et al. 2009). Nevertheless, these attempts could not achieve most of their objectives in an efficient route. For instance, Aegean Region Development Agency (EBKA) was formed in Izmir in 1993

to contribute the regional development projects and programmes of the city (Temizocak, 2006). Despite some achievements, EBKA could not work efficiently and turned into incorporation because of inadequate legal standards and financial resources (ibid). As similar to EBKA, another development agency initiative in Izmir, attempted to be built by Izmir Chamber of Commerce in the beginning of the 2000s, could not achieve successful results due to the lack of financial and coordinating support (Lagendijk et al. 2009).

Furthermore, Adana Investment Research and Development Centre (AYAGEM) was established in Adana in 2001 as a development agency-type initiative including private actors, local chambers, municipality and governorship (Özgümüş, 2006). AYAGEM aimed to explore conditions in improving the city's local potential (ibid). Initially, AYAGEM avoided centre's and DPT's superiority in its implementations. However, stakeholders could not further to succeed the projects in the absence of centre's role. Then, as a subsequent move of AYAGEM, the deputy governor of Adana was appointed as the head of the executive council in order to get advantages of the official channels and solve the problems. Nevertheless, this situation transformed it into a kind of sub-unit of the governorship and did not solve the financial problems (ibid). According to Özgümüş, a representative of AYAGEM, the 2006 Law recovered this unsuccessful experience.

In this context, a meeting banded together the representatives of such development agency initiatives in 2005 (TEPAV, 2005). Participants of the meeting underlined the significance of according local and national priorities with the involvement of DPT to the process (ibid). As seen, such experiences demonstrate remarkable position of coordination in harmonising priorities at different levels and of responding inefficiency problems of such bodies.

Under these conditions, the 2006 Law (CKA, 2006) brought coordinating role of DPT. In the article 4 of the law, DPT was authorised to sustain coordination of the agencies, with the task of determining procedures and principles about the usage and allocation of both national and international funds in regional development. Thus, DPT became responsible of specifying criteria for institutional performances, of measuring actions of development agencies, and of assessing outcomes. Amount of resource transfers to development agencies was adjusted in the law according to performance of the previous year and the demographic and developmental indicators of the region (ibid).

Furthermore, auditing system was arranged under the Auditing Regulation (The Official Gazette, 2009). According to this, determining conditions for usage of resources and for adequacy of financial

management is the subject of DPT's approval. In this framework, internal auditing investigates budget usage, expenditures and performance of development agencies whether they are convenient to efficiency and productivity principles. In addition to this, independent auditing bodies sustain external auditing by controlling agencies, examining convenience of their actions and preparing information for reports which are presented to DPT (ibid).

Performance outcomes obtained in auditing are assessed by DPT, which is responsible for implementing required measures (CKA, 2006). According to the article 4.7 of the Auditing Regulation, any significant and structural inconvenience reported in auditing may require terminating an agency's adequacy on financial management (The Official Gazette, 2009). On the other side, performance outcomes, which are evaluated as better than expectations and targets, are rewarded by centre. For instance, performance of Thrace Development Agency in 2012 provided supplement appropriation to the agency in the amount of 1.643M Turkish Liras (Marmara Haber, 2013).

Overall, these efficiency-related issues demonstrate significance of centre's monitoring and coordinating instruments in aiming to enhance efficient functioning. Interviews with DPT officials in the study of Young-Hyman (2008) indicate that DPT's main concern in budget allocation and oversight actions is to enhance competitiveness of development agencies and fair distribution of resources. Young-Hyman mentions that these conditions of funding and performance measurement are important to increase agencies' efficiency in Türkiye. As a top-level bureaucrat of DPT points out in another interview (Planlama, n.d.), the role of centre in this scheme is to regulate, to set standards and to audit development agencies' activities, while local actors implement plans and programmes in a consistent manner with both local and central priorities. A synchronised relationship between actors is considered as necessary for long-term development strategies (ibid). As seen, centre's concern is generally about efficient functioning, harmony and better outcomes of regional policy implementations.

As will be mentioned later in discussion of pragmatism, the first development agency proposal of ruling party in 2003 was consistent with new regionalist logic by emphasising improvement of local dynamics and of competitiveness among regions (Gündoğdu, 2009). However, there were too many actors within the process, including for instance local authorities, non-governmental organisations and provincial bodies without adequate coordination or cooperation that provide interaction within actors and synchronisation between priorities of them (Loewendahl-Ertugal, 2005). In this period, DPT officials in the interviews made by

Loewendahl-Ertugal underline some crucial points, such as traditional provincial structure of Türkiye and incapable coordination within local actors, as constraints of regional governance.

Under these circumstances, coordination and balance of several interests were required as solutions to problems of local bodies (Lagendijk et al. 2009) and of competing interests in regional context (Young-Hyman 2008). In this framework, Sevinç (2006) argues that DPT's coordinating role under the 2006 Law is reasonable in short-term to solve these coordination problems and doubts. These were about incorporating stakeholders in development agencies and coordinating governorships, municipalities and private sector participants in line with common objectives, by not allowing individual paths for regional strategies (ibid).

For instance, one possible danger in regional development policies was thought as competing agendas of municipalities in regional level (ibid; Young-Hyman, 2008). Because municipalities in Türkiye have better equipped instruments, some extent of financial autonomy and well-described interests, development agencies potentially may have faced incapabilities in relationship and cooperation with municipalities (ibid). As an example, in the establishment process of Cukurova Development Agency (CKA), Özgümüş (2007) mentions that municipalities questioned tasks of the agency in development issues and impact of this new institution over responsibilities of municipalities. Furthermore, research by Doğruel (2012) demonstrates that most of municipalities hesitate to contribute agencies' budgets. Even though most of the resources come from central or EU funds, municipalities do not pay more than 50% of their minimal share in 17 of 26 development agencies (ibid). Another problem, as Doğruel argues, is that some municipalities demand a privileged position in development agency projects regarding their financial contribution.

On the other hand, provincial interests were other subjects of sub-national complexity. Governor of Samsun, for example, declared that Samsun would be leader and centre in its region with its proven capability in terms of development, as compared to cities in its periphery, during establishment of the agency in the region (Karasu, 2009). As predicted, such competing agendas and complexity problems within provinces are correlated with the lack of coordination. In this respect, Doğruel (2012) explores that development agencies established in one province, such as the ones in Izmir, Istanbul and Ankara, do not need coordination or additional support as much as the other development agencies. The other 23 agencies, which function in regions with more than one province, need coordination in changing extents (ibid). Doğruel argues that agency executive councils containing two or more provinces work less effective than the agencies in one province. One reason, she mentions, is that provinces have sometimes

different priorities within these agencies (ibid).

These kinds of competing priorities seem to harm multi-level strategies. Hence, synchronisation of priorities becomes crucial to provide coherence within both regional plans and national agendas. In this vein, a specialisation commission report for the 9th Development Plan (DPT, 2008a) signs some weaknesses, such as authority turmoil and lack of coordination and cooperation within central and local actors. The report states that success of development depends on wide cooperation and coordination between actors.

In addition to complexity issue, uncertainty derived from the lack of experience or of information is another problem. Before EU-based regional development implementations, Türkiye had not experienced familiar forms of development agencies except a few examples, such as non-governmental experiences in Izmir, Adana and Mersin (Lagendijk et al. 2009), which are mentioned in discussion of inefficiency. Hence, in the beginning of development agency-related policies, DPT officials seem to be unsure who would be responsible for implementation and to have some doubts about sustainability of these new EU-based regional policies (Loewendahl-Ertugal, 2005).

On the other hand, local level has more problems with this uncertain context of regionalisation. Findings of Lagendijk et al. (2009) demonstrate that local actors have hesitancies to take a responsibility in regional development because of uncertain conditions. Moreover, as Sevinç (2006) mentions, position of development agencies in planning processes is not certain whether they are units for implementing national plans in region or for compromising priorities of various levels. As seen, establishment and functioning process of development agencies contain a couple of uncertain components.

In examining impact of uncertainty over local level, views in a meeting may help to understand relationship between uncertainty and demand for central coordination. The meeting was held by Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV) to analyse experiences of development agencies in June 2011 (Köroğlu, 2011a). It incorporated officials from agencies and DPT (ibid). One major problem participants agreed was that most of development agencies were rapidly formed in a limited duration without comprehensive information on current issues in regions (ibid). According to them, lack of knowledge derived from insufficient task definitions of agencies, and hesitancies of actors in participating into planning process created problems for agencies' functioning (ibid). Ideas of agencies' officials on implementation of regional plans show importance of coordination in overcoming uncertainty-related problems. Accordingly, they assume that central

coordination and the National Strategy for Regional Development (BGUS)[6], a centrally framed strategy, are required to overcome these problems (Köroğlu, 2011b). Officials support these to have a realist approach in implementation of plans. Otherwise, regional plans are expected to be endless (ibid).

1.5.3. Pragmatic Tendency

As understood, there is no monolithic direction in region-based policies in terms of new regionalist logic or of 'hollowing out' paradigms excluding state from political and economic relations. In order to deeply understand changeable and experimental dimensions of development agency-related policies in Türkiye, it is required to examine some changes in 2000's.

AKP government, which came to power in 2002, was ambitious to sustain EU-based reforms and programmes, despite party's tradition had been based on a political Islamist sect opposing to EU (Öniş, 2012). In this respect, Emergency Action Plan (DPT, 2003b) launched in AKP's first term included plans and reforms in local government and public management, while also aiming to establish development agencies in as far as one year.

In this context, the first development agency proposal in November 2003 emphasised regional framework with excessive authorities of agencies and authorised only a consultative role to DPT (Gündoğdu, 2009). However, critics from different actors created changes in this new regionalist content of the proposal (ibid). As an instance, Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmens' Association (TUSIAD), the biggest business association of Türkiye, criticised the proposal's regional framework by declaring that local policies should be consistent with national norms and standards (ibid).[7] On the other side, President Ahmet Necdet Sezer refused to approve the proposal with justification that its components are against central and unitary structure of the state (Loewendahl-Ertugal, 2005). Then, ruling party pragmatically changed its content, and the second proposal in 2005 did not include the word 'regional' in the name of agencies (Gündoğdu, 2009). This new proposal

[6] BGUS, which is framed by DPT in Strategical Plan for the period between 2009 and 2013, attempts to provide coordination and consistency between central and local approaches on development plans in line with priorities of national development (DPT, 2009a).

[7] Indeed, TÜSIAD had frequently supported regionalisation since the mid-1990s (Gündoğdu, 2009). However, Gündoğdu claims that the association avoids from a differentiation in scales and planning system which may harm its influence in market and seeks a centrally managed regionalisation.

aiming to form 'Development Agencies' also authorised DPT as a national coordinating institution with wider responsibilities (ibid), which are mentioned in the previous sections.

Moreover, following legislation process, two cases were presented to Constitutional Court (Şinik, 2010). These cases by Council of State and main opposition party were claiming that the 2006 Law is against administrative integrity principle of the state, which is coded in constitution. Constitutional Court dismissed the case in November 2007, by deciding that development agencies are not against unitary structure and that government may build institutions at regional level (ibid). As seen, this process decelerated establishment of agencies and changed their content to some extent.

However, more important dimension of this pragmatic tendency than political or judicial pressures was about implementations. Two pilot agencies, İzmir Development Agency (İZKA) and CKA, had been established in July 2006 regarding the 2006 Law (Öz, 2007; Can, 2007). Before judicial process stopped execution of them in 2007, the agencies had functioned in a short time (ibid). Both two agencies conducted similar attempts in their first implementations, such as preliminary regional development plans, data collection and improvement efforts for expertise in development (ibid). However, Özgümüş (2007) points out that the first activities of CKA, for instance, were useless and endless efforts because of uncertain conditions in institutionalisation. Similarly, Yaman (2007), a top-level official of DPT, confesses that two pilot agencies had problems in implementations. It is mentioned that the agencies could not prepare successful plans and projects, and not implement them, by creating doubts for future activities in other regions (ibid).

Here, as a solution to İZKA's problems, Tezcan (2007), deputy chief of Aegean Chamber of the Industry, underlines importance of cooperation and coordination among local actors and requirement of support from centre. Other recommendations for agencies repeatedly emphasise necessity of cooperation among local actors and relevant institutions, and of setting clear task definitions for agencies (Öz, 2007; Can, 2007). In a similar vein, Yaman (2007) mentions that area-based relations and planning were conducted in a messy and uncertain environment. For this reason, one required move is seen as building a constructive relationship and cooperation culture (ibid). Another move is about the role of DPT or centre in providing conditions that contain all actors and compromise different efforts in line with common targets (ibid). In this context, Yaman comments, during this judicially postponed establishment process of development agencies, that DPT's role was based on a pragmatic model in environment of risks, changes and uncertainties.

As understood, complexities, uncertainties and inefficient implementations pragmatically increased demand for coordination and cooperation in development agencies and related policies.

Indeed, coordination level of development agencies had been flexibly framed at centre, by suggesting in specialisation report, which was prepared in 2006. Accordingly, a union of agencies was also seen as possible to be formed for conducting coordination (DPT, 2008a). As offered by pragmatic perspective (Coaffee & Headlam, 2008), this flexible frame was consistent with suggestion on experimental balance between 'localism' and 'centralism'. Nevertheless, there were ongoing inefficiency, complexity and uncertainty problems of current experiences, mentioned above, which increased demand for coordination. Additionally, development agency-related conflicts in domestic politics, especially in judicial process, were other subjects that need to be responded with effective policies and coordination.

Consequently, important changes on coordination level came in 2008 in AKP's second term. Central level of coordination was gradually strengthened. When İZKA and CKA restarted to function in February 2008 after resolution of Constitutional Court (Şinik, 2010), coordination was key issue in policy domain. In January 2008, the 60th Government Programme (DPT, 2008b) contained a new strategical framework, by emphasising an integrated regional development in country wide. Thus, 'Regional Development Strategy at Central Level' which is framed as a basic instrument of centre was formulated for the sake of enhancing coherence for regional plans (ibid). Medium Term Programme (MTP) in June 2008 (DPT, 2008c) repeated this strategy in addition to aims of ensuring effective coordination and monitoring mechanisms at central level and of projecting 'Provincial Coordination and Monitoring System' with similar goals at local level.

Furthermore, subsequent MTP in 2009 redefined new strategy as BGUS, mentioned above, by describing its aim as providing central coordination and forming a general frame for lower-level plans (DPT, 2009b). Additionally, building a new central committee, namely Regional Development Committee (BGK), was planned to contribute central coordination initiatives, especially between central and local level (ibid). In MTP for the period between 2012 and 2014, High Commission for Regional Development (BGYK) was projected as another central coordination unit (The Ministry of Development, 2011).[8] As seen, policies

[8] BGK and BGYK were finally formed in a 2011 decree law (The Official Gazette, 2011). Accordingly, BGYK, consisting of prime minister and ministers, is responsible for determining regional policies and priorities at central level and of

on development agencies seem to be a subject of pragmatic changes towards a centrally dominated formulation under inefficient, uncertain and complex conditions of political and institutional contexts. In this way, pragmatic approach, as discussed previously, offers an answer to this new centralisation problem, regarding uncertainties, complexities, inefficiencies and other relevant causes in the process.

1.5.4. Role of Hierarchical Structure

As mentioned earlier, difficulties in regional policies and relatively slow institutionalisation in the CEE countries are also considered as relevant to traditional model of the states, based on hierarchical, top-down and unitary framework (Young-Hyman, 2008). Consequently, it is seen that weakness of local level, strength of central institutions and inexperience in regionalisation are in a relationship with these past designs (ibid). Similarly, Türkiye is thought as a country that has problems in regionalisation because of its traditional unitary design (Dulupçu, 2005; Göymen, 2005; Young-Hyman, 2008; Lagendijk et al. 2009). Göymen (2005) suggests that difficulties in devolving responsibilities for planning and implementation from strong central institutions towards regional level are caused by classical centralist structure in Türkiye. It is claimed that conventional structure creates remarkable shortcomings in social capital and resources at regional level in achieving targets of regionalisation and regional institutionalisation (ibid).

In a similar vein, Lagendijk et al. (2009) emphasises policy constraints in forming development agencies, because of highly centralised model of Turkish state and inexperience in regional governance. In Türkiye, the unitary state's top-to-bottom approach in regional policies comes from the fundamental logic of national state (Dulupçu, 2005; Göymen, 2005). From the 1960s on, an interventionist regional planning model has been conducted under central prescriptions and incentive models by leadership of DPT within the Five-Year Development Plans (Loewendahl-Ertugal, 2005; Göymen, 2005).

These plans were arranged according to national development priorities with attempts to solve regional disparities and to improve local level's capacity under centrally determined policies (ibid). In these conditions, central planning, investment and incentive models were also supported by local actors for the sake of stability at macro level, which had been seen by local actors as a prior action for regional development until the last quarter of the 20th century (Dulupçu, 2006). This dependency to

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approving BGUS. Moreover, BGK, whose members are undersecretaries of relevant ministries, aims to enhance policy recommendations on coordination, functioning and assessments (ibid).

centre caused inabilities of local actors in solving regional problems, while blurring their characteristics whether they are centre's agents or local players (Dulupçu, 2005).

Furthermore, centre is claimed that it has fears of losing control over local level in terms of financial and political autonomy (Lagendijk et al. 2009). Financial concerns were attempted to be balanced with national interests and priorities (ibid). However, political autonomy was an issue of concern with prominent fear of separatism even in the beginning of development agency-related policies in the 2000s, because of Kurdish separatist movement which is a salient topic of the country (Loewendahl-Ertugal, 2005).[9]

An instance of this kind of fear in central bureaucracy might be observed in the interviews made by Loewendahl-Ertugal in the mid-2000s. Most of the interviewees saw fear of separatism and unitary structure of central state as crucial constraints in regionalisation (ibid). Relevantly, as mentioned in the previous section, unitary state was major focus of criticisms to development agencies, regarding administrative integrity arguments, especially in judicial process that delayed functioning of them until 2008 (Şinik, 2010).

Moreover, inexperience in regional policies is also another problematic topic of traditional top-down structure of Turkish politics. Conventionally, administrative model has been based on a province-based system at sub-national level without a regional platform between centre and provinces (Dulupçu, 2005). This is indicated as a factor that constraints regional institutionalisation (Loewendahl- Ertugal, 2005).

Additionally, agency-type organisation model is also not familiar to conventional public administration of Türkiye (Güler, 2006). Instead of agency model, state has built provincial or local administrative units at sub-national level (ibid). As seen, top-down structure of state is one of the reasons that produce suitable conditions for inexperience in region-based

[9] Conventionally, Turkish state has based on a unitary structure with a dominant fear of regional autonomy, regionalism (Loewendahl-Ertugal, 2005; Dulupçu, 2005) and separatist movements (Lagendijk et al. 2009). However, Kurdish movement is implicitly discussed in the issue of regionalism and development agencies in a limited number of studies (ibid; Dulupçu, 2005; Loewendahl-Ertugal, 2005). For this reason, it requires more elaboration in further research. On the other hand, for suggestions on unitary structure, this section will briefly mention that these prominent fear and suggestions do not play a primary role in development agencies, especially after the 2007 resolution of Constitutional Court on development agencies' consistency to unitary state (Sinik, 2010).

policies. As understood, deep-rooted administrative causes may contribute explanations on dominance of centre to some extent, in terms of their impact on weak, complex and inexperienced features of local-central relations in Türkiye. Nevertheless, all these causes, by themselves, seem to be insufficient in explaining new centralisation, despite they present some structural conditions of the country's regional policies.

Some historical incidents may prove inadequacy of suggestions based on these causes. Since the 1980s, regional development has become an important topic in national plans with increased impact of neoliberalism in Turkish politics (Goymen, 2005). The 1990s brought efforts to accord regional policy initiatives in line with EU regional policies, by developing structural reforms to decrease regional disparities (ibid). Additionally, the 2001 crisis created doubts on sustainability of classical centralist dominance in regional development (Dulupçu, 2005). Also, sub-national and non-governmental actors raised their attempts to participate into regional decisions (ibid). The EU accession process in the 2000s was the most important driving force behind the country's harmonisation to regional policies and institutionalisation (Lagendijk et al. 2009).

At the same time, AKP, which comes from an Islamist tradition that does not embrace hierarchical state ideology, managed new regional policies without lodging in the fear of separatism (Loewendahl-Ertugal, 2005). This fear had been signed as an important constraint of classical hierarchy in regional policies. Furthermore, despite judicial processes in the mid-2000s and statist opposition to development agencies, Constitutional Court's resolution in 2007 approved consistency of agencies to administrative integrity coded in constitution (Şinik, 2010).

If hierarchy-based arguments are primarily considered, there should have been a decrease in centre's dominance in regionalisation and institutionalisation under such conditions of the 2000s. Instead of such decrease, central coordination has incrementally expanded with wide usage of efficiency-related mechanisms, auditing and monitoring actions, and with complexities and uncertainties at local level. At this point, legacy of top-down model may be credible to some extent while presenting evidence on weakness and inexperience of regional institutionalisation. However, new type of central coordination, discussed above, requires new instruments and approaches to be examined, such as suggestions based on NPM and New Localism within increased scope of regulatory state under PWC.

1.6. Evaluation on Centralization

This study aimed to explore causes for centre's dominance in a Turkish regional policy case, namely development agencies which have been a subject of slow and complicated establishment process in Türkiye in

the 2000s. Despite idealistic content of 'new regionalist' explanations that overrated prominence of regional level and underrated the role of central state in regional policies, development agencies in Türkiye seem to emerge under centrally determined formulations and implementations. Literature on this issue mainly focuses on these regionalist formulas or on difficulties caused by traditional hierarchical and unitary structure of state in producing such halting regionalisation process. Because of this situation, purpose of this study was to analyse issue with a different lens which is based on drastic changes in political economy to explain centre's dominance in Turkish case. These changes that affect politics, public sector and localisation seem to be crucial to understand the roots of situation in development agencies in terms of local-central relations.

Turkish case has emerged as an EU-based regional project in the environment of a transition from Washington Consensus to PWC which hybridised relations in both market and state affairs by giving a renewed effective role to state. In Türkiye, PWC-related changes (Öniş, 2012) and NPM reforms (TBMM, 2003) transformed local-central relations in the 2000s. In line with studies on regulatory state (Gilardi et al. 2006; Levi-Faur, 2010) and on audit society (Power, 2000), usage of oversight mechanisms, performance measurement, monitoring and auditing instruments incrementally broadened in the environment of public organisations and new bodies including development agencies.

Under these circumstances, Turkish case was examined by the help of some intermediate causes in triggering application of these principles and mechanisms over development agencies. These intermediate causes, which are observed in some other countries' regionalisation experiences, presented possible dynamics for central coordination's weight. Hence, New Localism studies in the UK (Lowndes & Wilson, 2003; Stoker, 2004) and examples from the CEE countries (Young-Hyman, 2008; Kayasu & Yaşar, 2006) highlighted remarkable position of such causes, namely inefficiency, complexity and uncertainty, in increasing demand for central coordination in local governance issues.

Thus, one assumption was that inefficiency in development agencies' functioning may cause an increase in central coordination and in application of NPM instruments to enhance efficiency. On the other hand, complexity and uncertainty were considered that they might be raising coordination demand to avoid from a harmful competition among local actors and inexperience in regional policies. However, for complexity and uncertainty, experiences of these countries did not give enough evidence on coordination level whether it would be solely central or regional. In addition to these, pragmatic approach (Coaffee & Headlam, 2008) with the aim of explaining experimental localisation policies in the UK provided

an applicable framework to understand new centralisation in Turkish case.

Furthermore, suggestions based on hierarchical structure (Dulupçu, 2005; Young- Hyman, 2008) were critically assessed. It was claimed here that structural evidence of these suggestions might contribute arguments on uncertainty and complexity at local level but do not explain increase of control and assessment mechanisms under new centralisation.

In this context, in Turkish case, inefficiency is seen as crucial to increase central coordination in terms of enhancing a balanced budget allocation under coordinating actions of DPT and its result-oriented assessments with findings of auditing bodies. Unsuccessful experiences of non-governmental bodies before development agency project and desire of local actors in the mid-2000s also indicate significance of centre's support and coordination in achieving regional targets. It was stated that performance and outcomes are measured to increase efficiency in development agencies, thus budgets and incentives are determined under regulatory and standard-setter role of DPT.

Moreover, in complexity issue, increased number of entities at local level and competing priorities of municipalities and provinces raised coordination demand in line with common targets and harmonised priorities within both local and national levels. Similarly, uncertainty due to inexperience in regional policies is especially seen as unclear task definitions and planning initiatives. Local actors, for this reason, demand a centrally determined solution, namely BGUS, which is expected to eliminate uncertainties and to create coherence for regional strategies.

Discussion of pragmatic tendency, being based on variables mentioned in discussion of central coordination demand, attempted to explain experimental route of AKP governments in the 2000s. In its first term, AKP changed initial regionalist content of development agencies on behalf of increase in DPT's role, when it faced with opposition of proponents of unitary state and national scale. More importantly, central coordination was strengthened with new entities in its second term, after unsuccessful and inefficient implementations of two pilot agencies.

Furthermore, discussion of hierarchy presented arguments on deep-rooted top-down model of Turkish state. These are strength of centre in traditional regional policies, province-based structure, fear of separatism and dependency of local actors to centre. Despite these might contribute complexity and uncertainty arguments of this study, it was suggested that new NPM-based instruments of centre are not directly relevant to these structural facts, while building indirect control and assessment mechanisms under centre's regulatory role. Hence, centralisation in the 2000s might be explained with renewed role and tools of centre and practical policy shifts in aiming to solve internal problems of this new environment.

New type of centralism has strengthened through significant stages in the 2010s. Transition to the Presidential Government System constituted the most critical stage, as it brought about substantial institutional changes. Presidential Decree No. 4, enacted in 2018, introduced a series of institutional reforms aimed at aligning administrative structure with the Presidential Government System. Within this framework, development agencies were re-regulated in terms of both their organizational structure and operational principles. Article 184 of the decree defines purpose of development agencies as accelerating regional development in accordance with policies determined by President, ensuring continuity of development, and reducing inter- and intra-regional disparities by strengthening cooperation among public sector, private sector, and civil society, promoting the efficient use of resources, and activating local potential.

While coordination of development agencies had previously been carried out by DPT and later by the Ministry of Development, Article 187 of the decree assigns this responsibility to the Ministry of Industry and Technology as of 2018. In line with earlier regulations, development councils continue to function as advisory bodies within agency structure, as will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. They serve as the primary platform for interaction among representatives of public organizations, private sector actors, and civil society, thereby providing a mechanism through which participation and governance can be realized. In the context of centralism, discussing actors involved in governance network and the content of relationships between these actors is of great importance. This will be the main objective of the following chapter.

2. PRAGMATIC PREFERENCES IN GOVERNANCE: A REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS[10]

2.1. Development Agencies and Governance

This section concentrates on relationship between development agencies and governance concept. To clarify this, it is better to begin with how development agencies are considered in terms of interaction between actors in governance networks. Avaner and Düzenli (2023: 53) define development agencies as "public institutions responsible for providing support in the implementation of plans and programs in line with regional development objectives". According to Atmaca (2020: 66), who defines agencies as "semi-autonomous administrative organizations", agencies claim to achieve regional development through "co-management" within a multi-actor structure, with the collaboration of representatives from public and private sectors, and civil society. Objectives such as supporting regional businesses and projects, attracting investment, reducing regional development disparities, enhancing competition and employment, generating development or sector-related solutions, and achieving regional development with participation of regional actors are frequently encountered elements in defining agencies (Akpınar, 2017: 299; Atmaca, 2020: 66-67; Badem 2023: 692; Coşkun & Almalı, 2020: 224; Karaca, 2019: 738; Kutlu & Görün, 2016: 16).

As mentioned in previous chapter, although instances of such organizations existed in various countries at earlier dates, emergence of agencies developed alongside transformation in regional development paradigm that occurred after the 1970s and is known as "new regionalism". Instead of regional development policies shaped by central governments prioritizing national development, new regionalism is associated with an endogenous growth model that focuses on developing local dynamics, involving regional actors, emphasizing innovation and initiatives that unlock regional potential (Akbulut & Göküş, 2017: 81; Bulmuş & Polat, 2020: 296; DDK, 2014: 767; Övgün, 2013; Özmen, 2022: 61). New regionalism is based on recognition that spatial organization has shifted in globalization process and that regional scale should be preferred over national scale. In this context, more flexible structures that will play a role in regional development should be developed to replace organizational tools of nation-states, which are claimed to be ineffective, and participatory structures based on regional governance should be adopted rather than

[10] This chapter derives from an expanded version of the paper entitled "*Kalkınma Ajanslarında Yönetişim: Kalkınma Kurulları Üzerine Bir İnceleme,*" originally presented by the author at the 8th International Congress of Thrace Scientific Research.

centralized and bureaucratic organizations (Karasu, 2015: 274).

In relation to aspects discussed in the first chapter, this tendency also reflects transformation of production organization in the context of international political economy. Fordism, which encompassed mass production in labour process, balance of production and consumption within national economies, and institutionalized negotiation processes within welfare states, entered a crisis after the 1970s, and flexible organizational forms, discussed under the rubric of Post-Fordism, began to emerge (Jessop, 1996: 167-169). With these new trends, idea of creating new management tools compatible with regional/local dynamics as an alternative to national scale and mechanisms required by Fordist industrial structuring became widespread (Güler, 2009: 57).[11] In administrative aspect, emphasis shifted from hierarchical and bureaucratic structures of past experiences to horizontal, lean, and flexible organizational forms. Under these conditions, which triggered state restructuring, it was believed that nation-states began to lose its primacy over governance mechanisms (Jessop, 1996: 171, 175-176).

In Türkiye, agencies emerged as regional examples of the sought-after new governance model (Küçükyağcı, 2023: 230). In this respect, agencies emerge as product of a new institutional trend to serve as a bridge between international capital and regional economies (Güler, 2009: 63). This is intended to connect local potential with international markets (Övgün, 2013). State assumes a regulatory role within this new network of relationships, with agencies designed as regional instruments for this role, executing regulation by monitoring local market (Övgün, 2017: 21-22).

As mentioned previously, EU was a critical actor in stimulating the creation of these agencies. Since the 1990s, EU has pursued programs for member states and candidate countries, aiming to develop infrastructure and financial support for small businesses, support regional products, and increase employment. Development agencies have been established in various countries as instruments of these policies (Akbulut & Göküş, 2017: 83-84). Furthermore, pursuit of regionally utilizing EU funds through these agencies has also played a role in the establishment process of these agencies, and development agencies have become widespread in many countries in this way (Özmen, 2022: 62). In a similar vein, emergence of agencies in Türkiye in the 2000s was linked to search for funds (Güler,

[11] As a result of proliferation of subcontracted production, gap between developed and underdeveloped countries has widened. Flexible or Post-fordist industrial organization in underdeveloped countries positions itself as a contract manufacturer for international capital, producing labour-intensive products (Güler, 2009: 57).

2009: 53; Kutlu & Görün, 2018: 74).[12]

The situation EU was striving to create through these regional development policies in its relationship with other actors was aimed at establishing political and economic integration. As Karasu (2015: 308) states, EU aims to establish a structure which it can overcome regulations of member states and facilitate regional market formation through regional scale and development agencies. Furthermore, considering the role played by EU, establishment of agencies is considered policy transfer (Tahtalıoğlu & Özgür, 2016: 175). While this situation can be considered within the context of policy transfer in terms of conditionality, Karasu (2015: 307-309) argues that, as UK case indicates, it was not a one-way relationship, and that agencies did not emerge solely due to EU's influence, and that an explanation based on policy transfer would be inadequate. In this respect, regional rescaling, and development agencies were products of an unequal but reciprocal interaction established with EU. In addition to EU influence, internal dynamics, domestic business organizations and some civil society actors also played a critical role (Karasu, 2015: 308).

For development agencies, discourse of governance is complementary to economic and political developments (Karasu, 2015: 274). In this sense, relationship between agencies and governance was a frequently discussed topic in Turkish literature (Akbaş, 2017; Akpınar, 2017; Arslan, 2016; Arslan, 2021; Atmaca, 2020; Badem, 2023; Balcıoğlu, 2021; Bulmuş & Polat, 2020; Çelik, 2018; Efe, 2016; Kutlu & Görün, 2016, 2018; Küçükyağcı, 2023; Özhan & Keser, 2021). In general, decision-making and planning processes in agencies are addressed through governance. Concept of governance encompasses claims that role of state has changed, that classical state apparatuses have become dysfunctional in multi-actor decision-making processes, and that a new administrative relationship has been adopted. Accordingly, in the 1990s, when the concept became popular, governance was considered alongside the claim of hollowing out of state, and it was argued that supranational and subnational actors had become more influential than states (Jessop, 1996: 176). Jessop (1996: 176-178) argues that in transition to governance, where new forms of partnership, including non-governmental organizations and market actors, have become widespread, states have become less centralized, interventionist, and hierarchical, yet continue to be 'primus inter pares'. In this respect, debate surrounding governance has an aspect centred on whether state has become ineffective as discussed in

[12] However, in the following years, contribution of EU funds to agencies was not sufficient and funds remained quite limited within budgets of development agencies in Türkiye (Karasu, 2015: 294; Küçükyağcı, 2023: 247).

the first chapter of this study.

However, when development agencies are considered within the framework of governance, general view is constructed around themes of civil society participation in decision-making processes and democratic functioning within a multi-actor structure, and in this respect, it is presented in a normative dimension that converges with the claim of state ineffectiveness. For example, 'essence of governance is seen as cooperation and solidarity between public, private, and civil society organizations' (Badem, 2023: 692), and it is said that 'transition from a single-actor management approach to a multi-actor governance approach supports the idea of establishing flexible, participatory, effective, and efficient institutions to replace institutions of past' (Kutlu & Görün, 2016: 33). Governance, which is approached with participation of individuals and institutions other than official actors and the idea of a democratic process, emphasizes importance of participation mechanisms, where no actor can dominate decision-making and each actor can be as effective as others (Akpınar, 2017: 298; Çelik, 2018: 366; Özhan & Keser, 2021: 23). Indeed, with governance, 'participation in local units will increase, and peace and well-being will be ensured among local population' (Atmaca, 2020: 73).

As can be understood, assumptions about what governance should be are frequently encountered and are based on an idea of 'ideal' governance. In this context, structure and functions of agencies are evaluated based on 'should be' characteristics of governance. When considered based on 'ideal governance', issues such as content of governance mechanisms or existing structure and which actors participate in process can be overshadowed. This is particularly critical for development councils, which are advisory bodies of agencies. Therefore, following section focuses specifically on development councils.

2.2. Development Councils and 'Founding Philosophy'

Development councils, if it is appropriate to use the words preferred in relevant studies, are seen as examples that best reflect philosophy, principle or spirit of governance (Akpınar, 2017: 303; Arslan, 2021: 828, 835; Çelik, 2018: 373; Kutlu & Görün, 2016: 24-25). It is assumed that by creating a platform where public, private sector and civil society representatives meet through development councils, a driving force can be provided that might activate local dynamics and contribute to regional development with participation of local actors. However, current council model does not automatically create 'ideal governance'. Issues such as councils being organized on the basis of giving advice rather than having decision-making authority, members having limitations of knowledge and expertise, low level of participation in council meetings, council opinions and suggestions not being taken into account, failure to hold even number

of meetings stipulated by law in some cases, existence of central government influence on councils and appointment of representatives directly by presidential decrees hinder governance in councils (Arslan, 2016: 36; Arslan, 2021: 828; Coşkun & Almalı 2020: 230; Çelik, 2018: 373; DDK, 2014: 779; Kutlu & Görün, 2016: 24; Yağcıoğlu, 2023: 239-240). Akpınar (2017: 297) states that development councils, which are assumed to reflect principle of governance, have become dysfunctional, ineffective, low-participation meetings and have turned into local platforms. Similarly, as can be seen in Arslan (2016: 35), who characterized agencies as 'administration without governance', in Efe (2016: 13), who conducted research on 'uniform structure' criticism, one of the problems identified in the 2014 DDK report, or in Öztürk (2024: 33), who conveyed a view that councils do not function effectively, the 2014 DDK report forms main ideas of these criticisms. It would not be wrong to say that studies conducted in recent years on relationship between development councils and governance have generally been based on findings and recommendations of the relevant report. According to the report, agencies are subject to a single type of organization, a regional classification which is not suitable for local needs. Additionally, agencies have inability to ensure coordination and participation at regional level. These are considered significant shortcomings (DDK, 2014: 776-777). Regarding development councils, a structure consistent with governance, which is considered as 'founding philosophy', has not been achieved. According to DDK (2014: 798), there is a functionality problem within agencies' bodies, primarily in development councils, and this is incompatible with purpose and philosophy stipulated in the founding law. Established as unique organizations, these agencies have lost their originality and are vulnerable to imminent threat of becoming a classical public organization, perceived as intermediary bodies of centre in provinces. In this regard, the report recommends taking priority measures to address these issues (DDK, 2014: 798).

This situation, characterized as a problem of conformity with the founding philosophy and/or functionality of governance mechanism, has reached another critical threshold two years after publication of the 2014 DDK report. With the Council of Ministers Decision No. 2016/9112, dated August 15, 2016, the table regarding the lists of development council members in all agencies was abolished, the terms of office of the council members expired, and operations of the councils were terminated as of that date. The Court of Accounts Report (Sayıştay, 2018: 67) states that this situation was based on the measures taken after the July 15 coup attempt. It is possible to assume that the termination of council memberships was related to the state of emergency conditions of that time and investigations conducted. However, with the Council of Ministers Decision No.

2017/10800, dated September 11, 2017, new members were appointed only in agencies of a single province (İSTKA, ANKARAKA, İZKA), but in the other 23 agencies, development councils continued to be bodies without members and therefore unable to fulfill their functions. With Presidential Decision No. 5308, dated March 18, 2022, new council members were appointed in the aforementioned three development agencies, but councils in the other agencies were not included in the new list, which is currently valid. Therefore, in 23 out of 26 agencies, development councils have remained dysfunctional since 2016 to the present.

Relevant studies following this moment generally indicate a governance deficiency that can be characterized as a problem of conformity with 'founding philosophy'. For example, Akbaş (2017: 445), in a survey conducted with members of the Southern Aegean Development Agency's development council before 2016, found that representatives from civil society organizations, local governments, and chambers of commerce considered number, content, and attendance levels of council meetings insufficient, that there was a widespread belief that the council's membership composition was predominantly composed of representatives from public sector, and that civil society representatives, in particular, were uncomfortable with bureaucratic structure of council. Kutlu and Görün (2018: 84-85) state that while presence of local actors in development councils is consistent with governance, current situation, where central actors are dominant and agency bodies have limited functionality to obtaining approvals and providing information, indicates that central authority plays a decisive role. According to Karaca's (2019: 746) study, stakeholders believe that agencies failed to improve collaboration between private sector and civil society organizations and that councils did not function effectively enough to contribute to achieving development agencies' founding objectives. Çelik (2016; 2017; 2018) also reached similar conclusions in his research on İZKA development council. Council meetings are limited to routine topics, some meetings consist only of election of organs (Çelik, 2016: 63), some members express the opinion that council should include professionals in their fields instead of actors from within bureaucracy (Çelik, 2017: 70), and perceived problems include dominance of central government in activities of development council, uncertainties in selection of council members, and weaknesses in authority of council (Çelik, 2018: 373).

However, the opinion that İSTKA development council, one of the three examples that have existed since 2017, is not working effectively enough has repeated in annual reports of İSTKA (2016: 11; 2017: 47; 2018: 61; 2019: 65; 2020: 67; 2021: 81; 2022: 59; 2023: 77; 2024: 84), and

according to the reports, it is understood that meetings are generally devoted to elections or routine issues, and some meetings cannot be held. A similar situation exists for ANKARAKA development council. Meetings of it are generally limited to election of members for the board of directors and election of chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary of development council (ANKARAKA, 2018a: 7; 2018b: 9; 2018c; 2019; 2020a: 7; 2021; 2022a; 2022b). On the other hand, meeting planned for July 2020 was postponed due to pandemic (ANKARAKA, 2020b: 7), and the first meeting in 2021 was also not held for same reason (ANKARAKA, 2022a: 10). In the 2023 annual report, while information about meetings of the board of directors is given, in the section immediately following, which usually mentions development council, no statement is made about council meeting being held, and in another section, it is stated that meeting could not be held without providing any reason (ANKARAKA, 2024: 10, 83).

In İZKA, until the last months of 2017, termination of council memberships prevented election of members from development council to the board of directors. Consequently, the board of directors could not convene in second half of the year due to a lack of quorum. The first meeting of development council in new term was held on December 14, 2017 (İZKA, 2018: 22-23). As can be understood, absence of development council during this interim period negatively impacted activities of the board of directors. Furthermore, irregularities and inadequacies in meetings continued in new term. For example, the 2018 annual report (İZKA, 2019) contains no information on whether development council met, only information regarding its place within general organizational structure. At the meeting held in February 2019, election of council chairman took place, and at the meeting in December of the same year, chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary were elected, and three members to be sent to the board of directors were determined through elections (İZKA, 2020: 20). In this respect, İZKA's development council meetings have continued to follow an agenda limited to elections. While the 2020 annual report contains no information about council meetings (İZKA, 2021a), it was announced that the 2021 meeting would be held online (İZKA, 2021b). This situation is likely related to pandemic measures, similar to the situation at ANKARAKA. However, İZKA's 2023 annual report (İZKA, 2024a) also lacks sufficient information about development council meetings or development council itself. The meeting held in 2024 appears to have been limited to an election-related agenda. Routine election procedures were carried out at this meeting (İZKA, 2024b). Apart from elections, issues related such activities and information sharing for three development councils generally include examples such as providing information or presentations to development council members about agency's general activities. Therefore, development councils, whose

primary function is to provide advice, ironically have a structure with which information is shared, apart from holding meetings limited to election issues. In this respect, it appears that existing councils are not fulfilling an adequate role as an advisory mechanism.

These examples, which can be considered as a problem of non-compliance with governance, also raise doubts about necessity of councils. However, the continued existence of councils, even if they are not functional, brings an expectation that there is a potential for transformation in councils based on governance as 'founding philosophy'. In this respect, what is meant by returning founding philosophy and what expected or proposed change regarding councils are significant. In Karaca (2019: 748), one of the suggestions made by stakeholders is that development council and other agency bodies should be reshaped by considering needs that can allow realization of founding purposes. Efe (2016: 26) also states that needs of stakeholders, especially needs of council members, should be taken into account and that there should be initiatives beyond, for example, holding two meetings a year. According to a survey conducted with experts working in development agencies (Kuran & Bayraktar, 2020: 1173-1175), 55.2% of the experts do not find reactivation of councils useful without certain regulations. Agency experts generally have an idea of supporting councils with technical commissions and determining representatives by a commission composed of local actors. Furthermore, it is believed that greater benefits can be obtained from councils if their membership composition is changed to be predominantly from private sector, level of participation is increased with incentives such as remuneration, councils are transformed from advisory bodies into broader powers, their scope of duties is clarified, and their decisions are made binding (Kuran & Bayraktar, 2020: 1174). The idea of increasing private sector's weight and councils' powers is particularly noteworthy. Demands from government and business circles, as reported by Akpınar (2017: 301), also point towards strengthening governance-oriented structure. According to Akpınar (2017: 309), role of civil society representatives in councils and governance-oriented structure should be strengthened. In a similar vein, suggestions are made to reduce weight of public sector and increase effectiveness of council and its members to improve governance capacity (Akbaş, 2017: 309; Balcıoğlu, 2021: 303). In his study on Zafer Development Agency, which has been without a development council since 2016, Öztürk (2024: 32) also emphasizes need to reactivate council, make its meetings more effective, and increase the number of meetings. In terms of expanding powers of development council, participants in Akpınar's (2017: 305-306) research suggest that council should be transformed from an advisory body into an assembly, that it should be able to make binding decisions, that the board of directors should be

determined by development council, that chairman of the board of directors should be one of the representatives from development councils, and/or that agency's budget should be approved by development council.

As can be understood, the problem referred as conformity with founding philosophy or functionality is presence of a predominantly public sector structure in agencies and councils, and weakness of councils in terms of authority. According to this view, for example, if powers of councils were expanded, in other words, if councils were transformed into assemblies as seen above, and membership composition shifted towards private and civil sectors, functionality problem would be largely solved. In this respect, revealing membership composition of three development councils that have been operating since 2017, or more clearly, who is represented on these councils, have a potential to provide clarity about validity and objectives of the aforementioned demands and recommendations.

2.3. Examining Membership in Development Councils

Idealizing governance around a democratic and civil society character, based on the argument that state is becoming ineffective, reflects only a fragmented version of reality, consciously or unconsciously obscuring relationships between actors. In this respect, a closer look at functioning is necessary. In the 2000s, when development agencies were organized in Türkiye, main supporters of establishment process were business groups; agencies became focal point due to their potential to provide competitive advantages, eliminate problems in market functioning, and create new opportunities in capital accumulation (Güler, 2009; Övgün, 2017: 23-24). In this sense, governance structure in development agencies was envisioned to be based on a foundation that included 'a clear weight of business circles in decision-making mechanism' and 'delegated planning power to EU authorities and public power to' private sector (Güler, 2009: 44). Such criticisms of agencies have been based on the arguments that they support capital at the expense of working class and lead to an unequal distribution of wealth at regional levels (Çelik, 2018: 364).

From perspective of governance as founding philosophy, representation ratios of public, private, and civil actors in development councils are significant. The Council of Ministers Decision No. 2006/10550, dated May 31, 2006, determined the distribution of members in development councils of the first agencies established in Türkiye. Accordingly, İZKA (İzmir Development Agency) was envisioned to have 30 members representing public organizations, and 70 members representing private sector and civil society organizations. In Cukurova Development Agency, these numbers were given as 40 and 60, respectively. Therefore, 30% or 40% public sector representation, and 60% or 70% private and civil sector representation are ratios consistent with founding

philosophy. However, Güler (2009: 60-61) emphasizes that civil society organizations in development councils are also 'capital-based organizations' due to their connection with private actors and networks. In the first period of agencies, there was a clear trend towards business organizations in the distribution of memberships. Alongside this, the claim that representatives from public sector also held a weight shaped by preferences of ruling party was another critical element. This preference-based membership design had effects not only on public sector representatives but also on private and civil actors. For example, during that period, members elected to the board of directors of İSTKA by development council were from Türkiye Exporters Assembly (Türkiye İhracatçılar Meclisi-TİM), Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (Müstakil Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği-MÜSİAD), and Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists (Türkiye İşadamları ve Sanayiciler Konfederasyonu-TUSKON). This sparked a number of reactions. For instance, Turkish Industry and Business Association (Türk Sanayicileri ve İş İnsanları Derneği-TÜSİAD) and Turkish Business Confederation (Türk İş Dünyası Konfederasyonu-TÜRKONFED), which were not elected to the board of directors, criticized the situation that 'the board of directors was filled with civil society organizations with close ties to government' (Güler, 2009: 61). In this context, it appears that certain preferences played a role in determining council members during the early years of development agencies.

Similarly, in his study examining development agencies in England from the perspective of scale politics, Karasu (2015: 311) introduces the concept of pragmatism and argues that political authorities display differing preferences regarding scale and organization. Pragmatism, however, is not confined to structural arrangements alone. In Türkiye, the "continuous reforms" implemented since the early 2000s have led to the establishment, transformation, or abolition of numerous organizations, including development agencies. During this period of intense institutional change, tendencies toward the strengthening of government-connected private actors and the consolidation of political power have become increasingly evident (Karasu, 2015: 313). In this context, it can be argued that pragmatic considerations have played a significant role in shaping the organization of development agencies, particularly in the composition and functioning of their councils.

In terms of actors, relevant legal regulations envisage the presence of representatives from public, private, and civil sectors on development councils. For instance, the Council of Ministers Decision No. 2006/10550 mentioned above provides basic classification of public, private, and civil sectors. According to Article 2 of the Decision, public sector consists of

'central government, local administrations, universities, and other public legal entities', while private and civil sectors are defined as 'professional organizations with public institution status, associations, foundations, trade unions, confederations, and other civil society organizations'. Since private and civil sectors are presented as a single category in the Decision, it is necessary to make a further distinction here as well. Examining the distribution of İZKA development council memberships between 2013 and 2017, Çelik (2018: 376) finds a distribution close to 30% for public sector and 70% for private–civil sector. He notes that development council of that time included 30 representatives from public sector, 42 from private sector dominated by business organizations, and 25 from civil society. In this composition, public sector is largely made up of provincial representatives of central government while private sector representatives are predominant within both private and civil sectors.

In the author's classification, small and medium-sized enterprises, organized industrial zones, free zones, chambers of industry and commerce, and business associations constitute 'capital category' within private sector (Çelik, 2018: 376–377). Actors in civil sector without direct ties to business circles are understood to consist of associations and foundations operating in fields such as charity and social solidarity, faith-based activities, education, sports, environment, culture, and art. However, it is likely that some of these organizations are also established or organized by business circles. Nevertheless, framing private sector as 'capital-based organizations' and civil sector as organizations not directly and necessarily related to business associations makes it possible to develop a classification that largely reduces ambiguity.

In the three sections that follow, membership compositions of development councils that continued to exist after 2017 will be examined through this threefold classification. In addition, in order to better understand pragmatic preference patterns in membership composition, an effort will be made to identify which actors are directly represented through council membership.

2.3.1. Members of İSTKA Development Council Between 2017-2025

The membership of development councils of İSTKA, ANKARAKA, and İZKA for the period 2017–2022 was determined by the Council of Ministers Decision No. 2017/10800. Under this decision, each development council consisted of 31 members. Of these, six were to be appointed by governor of the province in which agency operates, including three representatives from municipalities and three from district governorships. The list currently in force was announced in 2022 by Presidential Decision No. 5308, which expanded the size of development

councils to 50 members. Unlike the 2017 Decision, the 2022 Decree does not include members appointed by provincial governorships. Table 1 presents the distribution of development council memberships for İSTKA.

Table 1. Distribution of İSTKA Development Council Members (2017–2025)[13]

Sector	2017	2022
Public	10	20
Private	10	12
Civil	11	18
Total	31	50

As shown in Table 1, in 2017, İSTKA development council comprised approximately 32% public sector representatives (10 members), 32% private sector representatives (10 members), and 36% civil sector representatives (11 members). Together, private and civil sectors accounted for 68% of council. This distribution closely aligns with previously observed 30%-70% ratio, indicating that council was not dominated by public sector between 2017 and 2022. According to the 2022 Decree, public sector's share increased to 40% (20 members), while private sector's share decreased to 24% (12 members), and civil sector remained at 36% (18 members). Although there was a modest shift in favor of public sector, combined representation of private and civil sectors still constitutes a majority at 60%. These proportions suggest that a 'governance-oriented structure' continues to characterize İSTKA development council.

The 2017 list includes members from public sector, comprising three municipalities and three district governorships appointed by provincial governorship, as well as four state universities. Private sector consists of professional chambers, associations, and organizations representing business community, including İstanbul Chamber of Commerce (İstanbul Ticaret Odası-İTO), İstanbul Chamber of Industry (İstanbul Sanayi Odası-İSO), Foreign Economic Relations Board (Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu-DEİK), Türkiye Exporters Assembly (Türkiye

[13] Tables 1, 2, and 3 are adapted from Çelik (2018: 376), which analyzed the membership of İZKA development council prior to 2017. In Çelik's table, private sector was further divided into subcategories for capital and labor, reflecting the presence of a union on council: capital accounted for 97% (41 members) and labor for 3% (1 member) of private sector. Since no union or similar actor is included in 2017 and 2022, these subcategories are omitted from the tables in this study. However, it should be noted that, under the current composition, private sector consists entirely of representatives from business organizations.

İhracatçılar Meclisi-TİM), İstanbul Mineral and Metals Exporters' Association (İstanbul Maden ve Metaller İhracatçı Birlikleri Genel Sekreterliği-İMMİB), İstanbul Textile and Apparel Exporters' Association (İstanbul Tekstil ve Konfeksiyon İhracatçı Birlikleri Genel Sekreterliği-İTKİB), MÜSİAD, TÜSİAD, Turkish Businesswomen Association (Türkiye İş Kadınları Derneği-TİKAD), and Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (Türkiye Seyahat Acentaları Birliği-TÜRSAB).

In civil sector, there are eight foundations and associations: Birlik Foundation (Birlik Vakfı), Economic Development Foundation (İktisadi Kalkınma Vakfı-İKV), İstanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İstanbul Kültür Sanat Vakfı-İKSV), Architects and Engineers Group (Mimar ve Mühendisler Grubu-MMG), Turkish Culture Service Foundation (Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı-TKHV), Turkish Voluntary Organizations Foundation (Türkiye Gönüllü Teşekküller Vakfı-TGTV), Third Sector Foundation of Türkiye (Türkiye Üçüncü Sektör Vakfı-TÜSEV), and İlim Yayma Society (İlim Yayma Cemiyeti-İYC), along with three foundation universities[14]: Bezmiâlem Vakıf University, Istanbul Medipol University,

[14] Council of Ministers Decision No. 2006/10550 refers to universities within public sector but does not explicitly include foundation universities. In Turkish public discourse, foundation universities are generally perceived as private universities. Legally, however, foundation universities are defined as higher education institutions established by foundations on a non-profit basis and are granted public legal personality (Uz, 2013: 74–75). Nevertheless, Uz (2013: 77–78) argues that the revocation in 2013 of their authority to expropriate—one of the essential attributes of public legal personality—has rendered their public status questionable. In addition, foundation universities differ from state universities in terms of financial administration and governance structures. One of the key distinctions in governance is the presence of a board of trustees in foundation universities. Appointed by the founding foundation, the board of trustees represents the legal entity, appoints senior administrators subject to approval by the Council of Higher Education, and is responsible for approving the university budget and personnel contracts (Sever, 2016). Taking these institutional differences into consideration, this study classifies foundation universities within the civil sector, similar to the foundations that establish them, as they are founded by private legal entities and governed by boards of trustees designated by those entities. However, Bezmiâlem Vakıf University—listed in the 2017 and 2022 İSTKA development council—and Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University—listed in 2022—constitute notable exceptions. These institutions were established by endowed foundations administered by the General Directorate of Foundations (Kala, 2020: 166–168). As a result, the fact that these foundation universities are linked to foundations overseen by a public authority allows for their potential

and Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University.

Regarding private actors, DEİK provides a salient example. Established in 1985, DEİK is an organization composed of private sector representatives and operates with the objective of strategically enhancing Türkiye's trade and investment relations (DEİK, 2025a). Article 36 of Decree Law No. 637, dated June 3, 2011, defines DEİK as a body formed by private sector organizations to conduct foreign economic relations of private sector. Its regulation on working procedures and principles further describes DEİK as a platform responsible for coordinating all dimensions of private sector's foreign economic activities—including foreign trade, international investment, services, contracting, and logistics—and for supporting business community in increasing exports and expanding commercial activities. According to Article 4 of the regulation, Ministry of Economy is authorized to determine DEİK's founding organizations, terminate status of founding and corporate members, and admit new corporate members. Article 5 outlines DEİK's duties, which primarily involve managing foreign trade relations, conducting activities and negotiations related to promotion of international investments, and formulating strategies and policy proposals. In this sense, DEİK functions as a board representing private sector organizations while being composed of market actors selected by central government.

DEİK's founding members include major business organizations such as the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye (Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği-TOBB), TİM, MÜSİAD, Anatolian Lions Businessmen Association (Anadolu Aslanları İş Adamları Derneği-ASKON), İSO, İTO, and TÜRSAB, several of which also hold seats on İSTKA development council (DEİK, 2025b). The Chair of DEİK's Board of Directors and Executive Board, Nail Olpak, previously served as president of MÜSİAD, an İSTKA development council member. Olpak is also a founding member of İlim Yayma Foundation—established by İYC, another development council member—and continues his membership in MMG, which is likewise represented on development council (DEİK, 2025c).

By contrast, TİM, the umbrella organization of exporter associations such as İTKİB and İMMİB—both members of İSTKA development council—represents more than 150,000 exporters nationwide (TİM, 2025). Under Article 2 of Law No. 5910, TİM is tasked with coordinating its member associations and representing exporters at

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inclusion in public sector. Nevertheless, in order to maintain consistency and avoid further classification ambiguity, these universities are also treated as part of civil sector within the study's three-tiered analytical framework.

the highest level. Meanwhile, İTO, İSO, and TÜRSAB function as professional organizations with public status, representing business actors in their respective sectors. TÜRSAB, for instance, is among the largest professional organizations in Türkiye, structured across 36 regions and comprising all travel agencies, as membership in TÜRSAB is mandatory for obtaining travel agency status (TÜRSAB, 2025). Finally, organizations such as MÜSİAD, TÜSİAD, and TİKAD are widely recognized as business associations whose primary function is to represent interests of their members within business community.

The choice of civil sector representatives is also noteworthy in that it reflects pragmatic preferences. The close ties these foundations and associations maintain with ruling party and business world complicate their characterization as purely 'civil society organizations'. For instance, founding board of Birlik Foundation includes influential figures from Justice and Development Party, such as President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, former Speakers of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye İsmail Kahraman and Cemil Çiçek, and former ministers Abdülkadir Aksu and Ali Coşkun (Birlik Foundation, 2025). Similarly, İYC is an association that has been active primarily in the field of education since 1951 and is currently recognized as working for public benefit (İYC, 2025a). Its former presidents include Kemal Unakıtan, a well-known figure associated with ruling party's earlier period (İYC, 2025b). İlim Yayma Foundation, established by İYC, is currently chaired by Necmeddin Bilal Erdoğan, the son of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (İlim Yayma Vakfı, 2025a).

Another organization on the list, İKV defines itself as private sector's specialized institution on European Union affairs. Founded in 1965 as a joint initiative of İstanbul Chamber of Commerce (İTO) and İstanbul Chamber of Industry (İSO), İKV has long been involved in Türkiye–EU relations and today receives support from major business organizations such as TOBB, TİM, and TÜSİAD (İKV, 2025). Moreover, İstanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSV) operates in cultural and artistic sphere. Its founding members included major companies and banks, such as Eczacıbaşı Holding and Ottoman Bank (Osmanlı Bankası). At present, the foundation's board of trustees is chaired by Ömer Koç, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Koç Holding (İKSV, 2025).

Another foundation closely connected to both political authority and economic elites is TGTV. Its board of trustees includes representatives from business organizations such as ASKON and MÜSİAD, as well as from various foundations and associations, including Ensar Foundation (Ensar Vakfı), Deniz Feneri Association (Deniz Feneri Derneği), the IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation (İHH İnsani Yardım Vakfı), and organizations such as İYC, MMG, and Birlik Foundation, all of which are

also represented on İSTKA development council (TGTV, 2025). A further illustration is provided by TKHV, which was established in 1985 with encouragement and support of Ministry of Culture (TKHV, 2025a). Its board of trustees includes Minister of Culture and Tourism and the deputy minister, indicating a direct institutional linkage with state (TKHV, 2025b). Comparable patterns can be observed in the case of foundation universities. Istanbul Medipol University, for instance, was founded by a foundation established by Fahrettin Koca, who until recently served as Minister of Health (İstanbul Medipol Üniversitesi, 2025). Similarly, Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University was established by İlim Yayma Foundation, whose board of trustees is chaired by Necmeddin Bilal Erdoğan (İlim Yayma Vakfı, 2025b).

Taken together, these examples demonstrate that a substantial proportion of organizations categorized as 'civil sector' representatives in the 2017 list maintain close ties to government and business organizations. Moreover, these actors are interconnected through overlapping memberships and institutional relationships, further reinforcing their proximity to political and economic power.

One notable outcome of pragmatic decision-making can be observed in the process by which members of development council are selected for İSTKA board of directors. For instance, at the meeting held on January 24, 2018, the representatives elected to the board came from DEİK, İYC, and TGTV (İSTKA, 2019: 11). Based on the preceding discussion, DEİK can be understood as representing business interests—exemplified by organizations such as TOBB, TİM, MÜSİAD, and ASKON—whereas İYC and TGTV function as civil society actors closely aligned with government. A similar pattern emerged at the meeting convened on January 28, 2020, during which DEİK, İYC, and TGTV were once again elected to the board of directors (İSTKA, 2021: 6). From this perspective, it can be argued that one of the key contemporary roles of development council lies in shaping the composition of the board of directors. Moreover, within İSTKA, the repeated election of the same actors from development council to the board over this period indicates a clear continuity in representation of governance network.

As shown in Table 1, the 2022 composition of İSTKA development council reflects representation from public, private, and civil sectors with 20, 12, and 18 members, respectively. Most members from the previous term retained their positions in the new period. The omission of organizations such as İTO and İSO in the updated list does not constitute a substantive change, as these institutions already hold seats on the board of directors. Within the 2022 public sector representation, development council includes three district governorships, five provincial directorates of

ministries, seven state universities, and five district municipalities. Pragmatic considerations are again apparent, particularly in the selection of municipal representatives. Of the municipalities represented in development council, four—Bağcılar, Beyoğlu, Esenler, and Fatih—are governed by Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi-AKP), while only one, Sarıyer, is administered by Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi-CHP) (TRT Haber, 2025). This distribution indicates that municipalities led by ruling party constitute clear majority among those selected.

With respect to private sector representation, the 2022 list introduces four new members: two technology development zones—Istanbul Technology Development Zone and Yıldız Technical University Technology Development Zone—and two organized industrial zones, namely Istanbul Anatolian Side Organized Industrial Zone (İstanbul Anadolu Yakası Organize Sanayi Bölgesi-OSB) and Istanbul Dudullu OSB. In addition, eight new civil actors have been included. Of these, six are foundations or associations —Avrasya Bir Foundation, Women's Education and Culture Foundation (Hanımlar Eğitim ve Kültür Vakfı), Turkey Design Council (Türkiye Tasarım Vakfı), Turkish Technology Team (Türkiye Teknoloji Takımı Vakfı), Doctors Worldwide Türkiye (Yeryüzü Doktorları Derneği), and World Ethnosport Union (Dünya Etnospor Birliği)—while the remaining two are foundation universities: Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University and Ibn Haldun University.

The selection of these new members likewise reflects ongoing pragmatic considerations. For instance, the chair of the board of trustees of Turkish Technology Team is Selçuk Bayraktar, the son-in-law of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Türkiye Teknoloji Takımı Vakfı, 2025), while the presidency of World Ethnosport Union is held by Necmeddin Bilal Erdoğan (Dünya Etnospor Birliği, 2025). Ibn Haldun University, founded in 2015, was established by the Youth and Education Service Foundation of Turkey (Türkiye Gençlik ve Eğitime Hizmet Vakfı-TÜRGEV). According to its official website, TÜRGEV was founded in 1996 under the leadership of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan during his tenure as Mayor of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (TÜRGEV, 2025). As noted earlier, Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University was established by foundations administered by the General Directorate of Foundations (Kala, 2020: 166–168). Taken together, these examples indicate that the inclusion of new civil members in İSTKA development council follows patterns of selection similar to those observed in earlier periods.

Examining members elected from İSTKA development council to the board of directors after 2022 indicates that the previous trend has persisted. Following development council meeting on May 31, 2022,

representatives of Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEİK), İlim Yayma Society (İYC) and Turkish Voluntary Organizations Foundation (TGTV) were elected to the board of directors (İSTKA, 2023: 7). In other words, DEİK, İYC, and TGTV continued to secure seats on the board of directors in the new term, and these actors still retain their positions (İSTKA, 2025). This demonstrates a clear continuity in the council's electoral preferences. Consequently, although DEİK, İYC, and TGTV are formally elected, they have become permanent members of İSTKA board of directors since 2017.

2.3.2. Members of ANKARAKA Development Council Between 2017-2025

Members of ANKARAKA development council were determined with the lists announced in 2017 and 2022. Table 2 shows distribution of ANKARAKA development council memberships:

Table 2. Distribution of ANKARAKA Development Council Members (2017–2025)

Sector	2017	2022
Public	12	26
Private	15	20
Civil	4	4
Total	31	50

As indicated in Table 2, ANKARAKA development council in 2017 included 12, 15, and 4 members from public, private, and civil sectors, respectively. This corresponds to approximate representation ratios of 39% for public sector, 48% for private sector, and 13% for civil sector, meaning that the combined share of private and civil sectors was 61%. These figures align closely with intended ratios outlined during the establishment phase of development agencies. As mentioned previously, Council of Ministers Decision No. 2006/10550 set public sector's share at 30% for İZKA and 40% for Çukurova Development Agency. Accordingly, the 2017 membership distribution in ANKARAKA does not substantially deviate from 'founding philosophy'. It should be noted, however, that public sector's share in ANKARAKA was slightly higher than in İSTKA in 2017. Another notable difference is lower representation of civil sector in ANKARAKA compared to İSTKA; in 2017, İSTKA had 11 civil sector members versus only 4 in ANKARAKA. Nevertheless, formal ratios for governance structure, in terms of combined private and civil sector representation, was maintained in ANKARAKA during this period.

By 2022, however, this balance had shifted in favor of public

sector. The 2022 composition shows 26 public sector members (52%), 20 private sector members (40%), and 4 civil sector members (8%). Civil sector remains significantly underrepresented compared to İSTKA. With combined share of private and civil sectors falling to roughly 48%, this distribution appears to reflect concerns regarding a degradation in governance mechanism. It is important to interpret this shift not only in terms of numerical ratios but also in relation to identities of members and implications of their participation in the board of directors.

In the 2017 list, public sector included five district governorships (three appointed directly by governorship), one regional directorate of a public organization, one provincial ministry organization, and five district municipalities (three appointed by governorship). Among these, Gölbaşı Municipality and Kahramankazan Municipality were administered by ruling party (Hürriyet, 2025a).

Private sector representatives consisted of three organized industrial zones (Başkent OSB, İvedik OSB, OSTİM OSB), one small industrial site construction cooperative, four technology development zones (Ankara Technology Development Zone, Gazi Technopark Technology Development Zone, Hacettepe University Technology Development Zone, Middle East Technical University-Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi-ODTÜ Technopark), two professional chambers (Polatlı Chamber of Agriculture, Haymana Chamber of Agriculture), and five business organizations (MÜSİAD, Investors and Industrialists Businessmen Association-Yatırımcı ve Sanayici İş İnsanları Derneği, OSTİM Defense and Aviation Cluster Association-OSTİM Savunma ve Havacılık Kümelenmesi Derneği-OSSA, Entrepreneurial Businesswomen and Support Association- Girişimci İş Kadınları ve Destekleme Derneği-ANGİKAD, and Ankara Tourism Operators Association-Ankara Turizm İşletmecileri Derneği-ATİD). Compared with İSTKA's 2017 composition, the higher presence of organized industrial zones and technology development zones in ANKARAKA is notable. Unlike İSTKA, which included representatives of exporters, ANKARAKA's board did not include exporter associations. While MÜSİAD's Ankara branch participated in development council, TÜSİAD had no direct representation.

Civil sector representation comprised two foundations—Muradiye Culture Foundation (Muradiye Kültür Vakfı) and Bilgi Education and Social Research Foundation (Bilgi Eğitim ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Vakfı)—and two foundation universities, Çankaya University and TOBB University of Economics and Technology (TOBB Ekonomi ve Teknoloji Üniversitesi-TOBB ETÜ). Both foundations operate on a religious basis (Muradiye Kültür Vakfı, 2025; Bilgi Vakfı, 2025). Regarding foundation universities, TOBB ETÜ was established by a foundation

created by TOBB, which functions as professional umbrella organization and legal representative of private sector in Türkiye, with 367 members across local chambers of commerce, industry, trade, and stock exchanges (TOBB ETÜ, 2025). Through the inclusion of TOBB ETÜ, TOBB has further reinforced its presence within the boards of directors and development councils of development agencies, extending its influence via a foundation university.

At the first meeting held in 2018, members elected to the board of directors from ANKARAKA development council were representatives from MÜSİAD, ODTÜ Technopark, and ATİD. The six alternate members included Hacettepe University Technology Development Zone, Başkent OSB, ANGİKAD, Bilgi Education and Social Research Foundation, Investors and Industrialists Businessmen Association, and Ankara Small Industrial Site Construction Cooperative (ANKARAKA, 2018c). The presence of technology development zones and organized industrial zones among principal and alternate members reflects the composition of development council in that election. MÜSİAD and ATİD also joined the board of directors representing business community. At the meeting held on December 19, 2019, MÜSİAD and ODTÜ Technopark were re-elected, while the other member was a representative from OSTİM OSB (ANKARAKA, 2019). The representation of organized industrial zones in the member composition is directly reflected in this election. However, all the representatives chosen by council are members from private sector. Therefore, it seems that the overall composition of council members tends to favor business circles.

In contrast to the 2017 list, the 2022 list does not include Gölbaşı Municipality, Polatlı Chamber of Agriculture, ATİD, Ankara Small Industrial Site Construction Cooperative, Investors and Industrialists Businessmen Association, or Bilgi Education and Social Research Foundation, although most other members retained their positions. It is notable that a large share of excluded members come from private sector.

In the 2022 composition, which reflects an increased presence of public sector, six new members are from district governorships, seven from district municipalities, four from provincial branches of ministries, and four from state universities. Among the newly added municipalities, five are governed by Justice and Development Party (AKP)—Akyurt, Ayaş, Haymana, Pursaklar, and Şereflikoçhisar—one by Republican People's Party (CHP)—Yenimahalle—and one by Nationalist Movement Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi-MHP)—Polatlı. Gölbaşı Municipality, which was a member in the previous term but is absent in the current list, shifted from AKP to MHP after 2019 (Habertürk, 2025). This indicates that the strategy observed in İSTKA case regarding municipality selection

continues to be applied in ANKARAKA.

An additional point of interest concerns the selected state universities—Ankara University, Gazi University, Middle East Technical University (ODTÜ), and University of Health Sciences (Sağlık Bilimleri Üniversitesi). Technology development zones affiliated with the first three universities are also included in the new council. ODTÜ Technopark and Gazi Technopark were members in the previous term, with ODTÜ Technopark elected to the board of directors from development council. Accordingly, the newly included universities should be considered in conjunction with the roles and influence of associated technology development zones within council.

In the 2022 list, four of the newly added private sector members are Organized Industrial Zones (OSB) or OSB associations—namely, Anadolu OSB, Ankara Siteler Furniture Manufacturers OSB Association, and the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd OSBs of Ankara Chamber of Industry. Two additional members are technology development zones: Ankara University Technology Development Zone and Ankara Technopark Technology Development Zone. The other new private sector members include one professional chamber, Polatlı Chamber of Commerce, and two business associations, Akyurt Industrialists and Businessmen Association and Kazan Industrialists and Businessmen Association. With the inclusion of these new members, the representation of OSBs and technology development zones in council has increased. Moreover, OSTİM Technical University, a foundation university established by OSTİM Foundation in 2017 (OSTİM Vakfı, 2025), has joined council. It can be inferred that the presence of this foundation university further enhances the influence of OSBs in general, and specifically reinforces the representation of OSTİM OSB.

The elections for the board of directors in ANKARAKA development council after 2022 reflect the composition of its members and the continuity of preferences. Representatives from MÜSİAD, OSTİM OSB, and ODTÜ Technopark were re-elected to the board of directors during this period. The six alternate members elected to the board of directors were representatives from Polatlı Chamber of Commerce, Başkent OSB, Ankara Technology Development Zone, Çankaya University, TOBB ETÜ, and Gazi Technopark (ANKARAKA, 2022b). Organized industrial zones and technology development zones continue to stand out among the elected full and alternate members. Apart from this, MÜSİAD retained its place among the full members, while in terms of alternate members, one professional association from private sector and two foundation universities from civil sector were included, in addition to organized industrial zones and technology development zones. Compared to İSTKA, ANKARAKA shows a preference for organized industrial zones

and technology development zones, while İSTKA's results highlight the prominence of civil society representatives with ties to government and business circles in the selection of board members. Therefore, although pragmatic choices are involved in both examples, the content of these preferences and the weighting of member compositions differ to a certain extent.

2.3.3. Members of İZKA Development Council Between 2017-2025

According to the lists published in 2017 and 2022, the distribution of İZKA development council memberships is as follows:

Table 3. Distribution of İZKA Development Council Members (2017–2025)

Sector	2017	2022
Public	19	30
Private	9	15
Civil	3	5
Total	31	50

As presented in Table 3, the 2017 İZKA development council consisted of approximately 61% public sector representation with 19 members, 29% private sector representation with 9 members, and 10% civil sector representation with 3 members. Compared to İSTKA and ANKARAKA councils in the same year, this distribution shows a markedly higher proportion of public sector, resulting in lower representation for private and civil sectors. In the 2022 composition, public sector accounted for 60% with 30 members, private sector 30% with 15 members, and civil sector 10% with 5 members. These figures indicate that İZKA has consistently favored public sector representation across both periods, with development councils maintaining similar ratios over time. While this pattern appears to diverge from ratios related to 'founding philosophy', a more nuanced understanding requires examining which specific members were selected to council and, consequently, who was elected from development council to the board of directors.

In 2017, five of the private sector representatives on İZKA development council were affiliated with professional chambers, chambers of commerce, or export associations, including Ödemiş Chamber of Commerce, İMEAK Chamber of Shipping İzmir Branch (İMEAK Deniz Ticaret Odası İzmir Şubesi, representing Istanbul and Marmara, Aegean, Mediterranean, and Black Sea regions), İzmir Union of Chambers of Craftsmen and Artisans (İzmir Esnaf ve Sanatkârlar Odaları Birliği), İzmir Commodity Exchange (İzmir Ticaret Borsası-İTB), and Aegean Exporters'

Associations (Ege İhracatçı Birlikleri). Additionally, one representative was from a private company, one from a free zone founder and operator company (Ege Serbest Bölge Kurucu ve İşleticisi Anonim Şirketi-ESBAŞ), one from an organized industrial zone (İzmir Atatürk Organized Industrial Zone), and one from a business association (MÜSİAD). These actors indicate that private sector representation was dominated by chambers of commerce and commodity exchanges.

Civil sector included three representatives: two from foundation universities (İzmir University of Economics-İzmir Ekonomi Üniversitesi and Yaşar University) and one from a sports club association. Notably, İzmir University of Economics was founded by the İzmir Chamber of Commerce Education and Health Foundation (İzmir Ekonomi Üniversitesi, 2025), and Yaşar University by Selçuk Yaşar Sports and Education Foundation, affiliated with Yaşar Holding (Yaşar Topluluğu, 2025). This suggests that civil sector representation was closely linked to business interests, indicating that civil sector's presence on İZKA development council was clearly related to business organizations.

At the board meeting held on December 11, 2019, with the composition described above, the members elected to the board of directors were representatives from MÜSİAD, İzmir Commodity Exchange (İTB), and İzmir Chamber of Craftsmen and Artisans (İZKA, 2020: 20). The elected İTB representative also holds membership in the TOBB Board of Directors and TÜSİAD (TOBB, 2025). Similarly, MÜSİAD representative was elected to the İZKA board of directors, paralleling the pattern observed in ANKARAKA. Therefore, despite the higher share of public sector in İZKA compared to İSTKA and ANKARAKA, representatives from business organizations were chosen for the board of directors. In this respect, although civil society participation—which would be considered necessary for a 'governance-oriented structure'—remains limited within development council, outcome aligns with other cases in terms of the number of members appointed to the board of directors. It can reasonably be inferred that a similar result would emerge even in a scenario with greater civil society representation, assuming that pragmatic selection tendencies remain consistent.

The 2022 list excludes three former members appointed by the governorship (from four district governorships), three members from provincial ministries, and three members from municipalities selected by the governorship. This change appears linked to Ödemiş Municipality's shift from AKP to CHP in 2019 (CNN Türk, 2025). Among the other members who did not continue on the new list, four were from private sector—İzmir Atatürk Organized Industrial Zone, İMEAK Chamber of Shipping İzmir Branch, Ödemiş Chamber of Commerce, and Tarihi

Kemeraltı Construction Investment Trade Inc.—and two were from civil sector, namely Konak Youth and Sports Club Association and Yaşar University. In comparison with İSTKA and ANKARAKA, İZKA exhibits a higher number of members whose participation did not carry over into the 2022 list.

Among the 22 public sector representatives included in the 2022 list, five are district governorships, eleven are provincial branches of ministries or other public organizations, five are district municipalities, and one is a state university. Of the five newly added municipalities, three are governed by AKP (Bayındır, Kınık, Kiraz), one by MHP (Aliağa), and one by CHP (Karşıyaka) (CNN Türk, 2025). This indicates that selection patterns similar to those observed in previous cases are also present in İZKA. Accordingly, as with other development councils, it is more informative to assess public sector representatives in terms of these relationships and pragmatic preferences.

Among the new private sector representatives added to İZKA development council in 2022, who were not present on the 2017 list, two are organized industrial zones, two are technology development zones (Dokuz Eylül University Technology Development Zone, İzmir Technology Development Zone), two are cooperatives (Tire Milk Cooperative, Ödemiş Bademli Agricultural Development Cooperative), one is a professional chamber (İMEAK Chamber of Shipping Aliağa Branch), and three are business associations (ASKON İzmir Branch, Energy Industrialists and Businessmen Association-Enerji Sanayicileri ve İş Adamları Derneği, Recycling Industrialists Association-Geri Dönüşüm Sanayicileri Derneği). Similar to the ANKARAKA case, the representation of organized industrial zones and technology development zones has increased in İZKA. Furthermore, the presence of business associations, including ASKON, indicates that the trend of emphasizing business actors on development council continues.

The 2022 list includes four new civil sector members. Two of these are İzmir branches of Birlik Foundation and İlim Yayma Society, both of which also hold positions on İSTKA development council. Another member is Aegean Forest Foundation (Ege Orman Vakfı), established and managed by Cem Bakioğlu, who is also a member of TÜSİAD (Enda, 2025). The fourth member is the İzmir branch of the Turkish Red Crescent (Kızılay), a non-profit organization dedicated to public welfare (Kızılay, 2025). The inclusion of Birlik Foundation and İlim Yayma Society may enhance influence of the ruling party and its affiliated business networks, reflecting a pattern like that observed in İSTKA. Additionally, Aegean Forest Foundation represents an actor with ties to TÜSİAD, further emphasizing connections to business networks within development

council.

Examination of the members elected from İZKA development council to the board of directors after 2022 indicates that dominant trend observed in the previous period has persisted. At the development council meeting held on June 11, 2024, representatives from MÜSİAD and İTB were re-elected to the board of directors. The third member, in contrast to the earlier term, is ESBAŞ, the company managing Aegean Free Zone, which replaced İzmir Chamber of Craftsmen and Artisans on the board. Additionally, representative of İlim Yayma Society, which joined development council in 2022, was elected as vice-chair of council (İZKA, 2024b). Consequently, in the post-2017 period —during which İZKA development council has been dominated by public sector representation— private sector, particularly a consistent set of actors from previous terms, continues to hold a prominent role among those elected to the board of directors.

CONCLUSION

Discussions of governance in development councils are typically articulated around issues such as representation ratios, member selection procedures, and the limited authority granted to these bodies. However, the core problem lies less in the numerical distribution of public, private, and civil sector representatives, the size of the boards, or the formal mechanisms of appointment, and more in the identity of the actors who constitute the so-called 'governance structure' and the manner in which these actors are ultimately reflected in the board of directors through electoral processes. Even in cases where development councils are formed through bottom-up mechanisms that prioritize regional or local dynamics over centralized, top-down selection, and where councils are vested with broader authority beyond merely nominating members or issuing advisory opinions, the decisive factor remains the composition of membership—specifically, social groups from which members are drawn. Accordingly, an approach that privileges quantitative considerations over qualitative ones, and that fails to interrogate which actors are actually represented, risks overlooking the substantive and practical dimensions of governance by emphasizing form at the expense of content.

An examination of the composition of three development councils indicates that the assertion that public sector has become dominant across these bodies is not entirely accurate. In the case of İSTKA, representatives from private and civil sectors continued to constitute a majority in both 2017 and 2022, with the overall distribution remaining in line with the 30–70 or 40–60 public versus private/civil sector ratios envisaged in 2006. A similar balance was observed in ANKARAKA in 2017, although a shift in favor of public sector emerged there in 2022, while in İZKA this tendency was evident in both 2017 and 2022. From this perspective, even when representation ratios alone are considered, claims that governance has uniformly deteriorated in favor of public sector are only partially applicable.

Nevertheless, a closer look at council composition reveals that private and civil sector representatives across all three cases largely consist of actors closely linked to business interests. Even İSTKA—which most closely aligns with 'founding philosophy' in quantitative terms due to its relatively strong private and civil sector presence—includes private and civil sector actors with close ties to both government and business circles. Thus, while numerical targets have been met, this case illustrates how pragmatic considerations shape outcomes in terms of the qualitative composition of representation.

Across all three development councils, members elected to the board of directors after 2017 have predominantly been drawn from private

sector or civil sector actors closely linked to business interests. In İSTKA, civil sector representatives selected for the board have largely come from organizations that maintain close relationships with government and politically affiliated business groups. With respect to business-oriented preferences, MÜSİAD has regularly been among the actors elected to the boards of both ANKARAKA and İZKA, while DEİK—whose founding members include TOBB, TİM, and MÜSİAD—has consistently been elected to the İSTKA board of directors throughout the period examined. Moreover, in ANKARAKA, organized industrial zones and technology development zones have been increasingly favored within development council, a trend that has been reflected in the profile of those elected to the board of directors, particularly in recent years. In the case of İZKA, although public sector holds a comparatively larger share than in the other two examples, the outcome remains similar: business organizations such as MÜSİAD, İzmir Commodity Exchange, and more recently ESBAŞ have been elected from development council to the board of directors.

It appears that pragmatic preferences favoring business actors and government-aligned civil society organizations among private and civil sector representatives also extend to the selection of public sector actors. This tendency becomes particularly visible in the case of municipalities represented on development councils. Unlike other public organizations, municipalities are embedded in competitive political dynamics, which renders them more susceptible to pragmatic selection. In this context, district municipalities governed by different political parties emerge as key objects of preference. Since 2017, the municipalities included in development councils of all three agencies have been predominantly those governed by the ruling party.

This pattern of selection, which directly shapes both the composition and functioning of development councils, represents a further departure from the idealized governance ideas grounded in principles of democracy and participation. At the same time, it suggests that as long as pragmatic selection practices continue to guide the inclusion of public, private, and civil sector actors, adjustments in representation ratios or numerical balances in favor of ideal governance claims are unlikely to produce meaningful qualitative change. In other words, even if private and civil sector representatives were to reach the anticipated proportional thresholds under similar selection logics, the outcomes would not differ substantially from the current configuration within prevailing state–capital relations.

Moreover, expanding the authority of councils formed through such pragmatic choices carries the risk of consolidating decision-making power in the hands of private actors and further amplifying the influence of

those members who are consistently elected to the board of directors. More broadly, this alternative scenario implies that decision-making authority within agencies responsible for allocating public resources could shift almost entirely to private and civil sector actors. Consequently, calls to return to 'founding philosophy' or to address functional deficiencies must be evaluated alongside the risk that development councils may evolve into decision-making mechanisms dominated by business interests.

Finally, it is useful to advance several projections regarding the future of development councils based on the findings of this study. Since 2016, development councils in 23 agencies have ceased to function, whereas the development councils of İSTKA, ANKARAKA, and İZKA—whose roles are largely confined to electing members to the board of directors—have remained in operation from 2017 to the present. The persistence of these councils, and their continued designation as advisory bodies under the current legal framework despite ongoing debates over their functionality, points to the possibility of future structural change. Such a transformation would most likely involve expanding the authority of development councils and reshaping them into more explicitly governance-oriented structures in line with their original 'founding philosophy'.

It is reasonable to anticipate that this trajectory would strengthen the role of private and civil sector actors in decision-making processes, as suggested by the alternative scenario discussed earlier. Beyond this, a broader institutional transformation affecting development agencies as a whole also appears possible. Reinstating the 'founding philosophy' in the 23 agencies currently without development councils would likely produce arrangements similar to those observed in İSTKA, ANKARAKA, and İZKA. Such a change would imply reactivating development councils in these agencies by granting them concrete authority, such as electing members to the board of directors.

Additional scenarios include moving away from a uniform organizational model toward more differentiated institutional forms, increasing the number of agencies operating within a single province, and designing decision-making mechanisms that afford greater influence to private and civil sector actors as the number of agencies expands. Under conditions of organizational differentiation, it is likely that development councils within provinces hosting multiple agencies would evolve into bodies endowed with broader decision-making authority. In the current context, development councils thus retain the potential to be redesigned as governance-oriented structures, ultimately transforming into mechanisms in which business interests play a more prominent role in decision-making processes.

The findings of this study indicate that structure and functioning of development councils are closely linked to issues of functionality; however, restricting the debate solely to criticisms and reform demands framed in terms of ideal governance ideas risks being misleading. The composition of existing councils is shaped within broader state–capital relations, and representatives from public, private, and civil sectors are selected through pragmatic considerations. As a result, development councils operate primarily as bodies responsible for electing members to the board of directors, while business interests play a decisive role in shaping both these functions and the underlying relationships.

Future research in this field should therefore move beyond idealized governance perspectives and focus directly on structure and operation of development councils. Emphasis should be placed on qualitative dimensions and substantive content of council composition rather than on numerical representation or formal arrangements. From this perspective, addressing questions concerning who the actors are and how their relationships are structured is likely to provide more meaningful analytical insights.

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